
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

<http://books.google.com>



NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06823200 2

20
St

Iustorum Semita;

OR,

THE PATH OF THE JUST.

**A HISTORY OF THE LESSER HOLYDAYS OF THE
PRESENT ENGLISH KALENDAR.**

By James Augustine Stothert.


"Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

REV. xxii. 14.

"I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh, for His body's sake which is the Church."—COL. i. 24.

NEW YORK
PUBLISHED
EDINBURGH

R. GRANT & SON, PRINCES STREET,

ABERDEEN: A. BROWN & CO. LONDON: JAMES BURNS.

MDCCCXLIV.

f



ROY W. B. B.
CLUB
HALL

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

CONTENTS.

DECEMBER.

DAY.	PAGE
6. S. Nicolas, Bishop	1
8. Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.....	5
13. S. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr	12
16. O Sapientia	14
31. S. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome.....	16

JANUARY.

8. S. Lucian, Priest and Martyr.....	32
13. S. Hilary, Bishop and Confessor.....	34
18. S. Prisca, Virgin and Martyr.....	56
20. S. Fabian, Bishop of Rome and Martyr	57
21. S. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr	60
22. S. Vincent, Deacon and Martyr	65

FEBRUARY.

3. S. Blasius, Bishop and Martyr	70
5. S. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr	74
14. S. Valentine, Bishop and Martyr	79

MARCH.

DAY.	PAGE
1. S. David, Archbishop	84
2. S. Chad, Bishop	9
7. S. Perpetua, Martyr.....	106
12. S. Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome.....	112
18. S. Edward, King and Martyr.....	126
21. S. Benedict, Abbat	129

APRIL.

3. S. Richard, Bishop	143
4. S. Ambrose, Bishop and Confessor	148
19. S. Alphege, Archbishop and Martyr.....	175
23. S. George, Martyr	180

MAY.

3. Invention of the Holy Cross	190
6. S. John ante Portam Latinam.....	204
19. S. Dunstan, Archbishop	206
26. S. Augustin, Archbishop	230
27. Ven. Bede, Priest.....	245

JUNE.

1. S. Nicomede, Priest and Martyr	255
5. S. Boniface, Archbishop and Martyr.....	256
17. S. Alban, Martyr	268
20. Translation of S. Edward, King and Martyr.....	279

JULY.

2. Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	282
4. Translation of S. Martin, Bishop and Confessor	291
15. Translation of S. Swithun, Bishop	294
20. S. Margaret, Virgin and Martyr	300
22. S. Mary Magdalene	304
26. S. Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary	312

AUGUST.

DAY.	PAGE
1. Lammas Day	315
6. Transfiguration	319
7. Holy Name of Jesus	328
10. S. Laurence, Deacon and Martyr	337
28. S. Augustin, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor	343
29. Beheading of S. John Baptist	374

SEPTEMBER.

1. S. Giles, Abbat and Confessor	382
7. S. Enurchus, Bishop	386
8. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary	387
14. Exaltation of the Holy Cross	422
17. S. Lambert, Bishop and Martyr	441
26. S. Cyprian, Archbishop and Martyr	445
30. S. Jerom, Priest, Confessor, and Doctor	470

OCTOBER.

1. S. Remigius, Bishop	496
6. S. Faith, Virgin and Martyr	502
9. S. Denys, Bishop and Martyr	504
13. Translation of S. Edward, King and Confessor	509
17. S. Etheldreda, Virgin	532
25. S. Crispin, Martyr	539

NOVEMBER.

6. S. Leonard, Confessor	542
11. S. Martin, Bishop and Confessor	547
13. S. Britius, Bishop	565
15. S. Machutus, Bishop	569
17. S. Hugh, Bishop	572
20. S. Edmund, King and Martyr	584
22. S. Cæcilia, Virgin and Martyr	591
23. S. Clement, Bishop of Rome, and Martyr	597
25. S. Katharine, Virgin and Martyr	602

ERRATA.

Page xxvi line 14 from bottom, *for* "the only festivals" *read*
"the only immovable festivals"

— 16 last line, *for* "Maximin," *read* "Maximian."

— 55 line 11 from bottom, *for* "Maximinian," *read*
"Maximian."

— 124 line 10 from bottom, *for* "Lord," *read* "Lord."

— 134 line 1, *for* "souls" *read* "soul"

— 161 line 1, *for* "the people" *read* "and the people"

— 184 line 19, *for* "Salisbury" *read* "Oxford" By a late
change, the chapel of S. George at Windsor is now included
in the jurisdiction of Oxford.

— 316 line 4, *for* "formally" *read* "formerly."

— 363 line 11, from bottom, *for* "violences." *read* "vio-
lence."

— 202 note. Bishop Montague was consecrated to the see
of Chichester in 1628, was translated to Norwich in 1638, and
died in 1641.

Part Second.

JUNE—NOVEMBER.

JUNE.

JUNE 1.

S. Nicomede, Priest and Martyr.

90.

S. NICOMEDE was a holy priest of the Roman Church, in the end of the first century. He is supposed to have been a disciple of the blessed Apostle S. Peter, and to have assisted him in preaching. Under the reign of Domitian, in the year 90, Felicula, a virgin, had suffered death for Christ, and Nicomede at the peril of his life buried her body with Christian rites. This last office was then, as now, deemed one of the seven corporal works of blessed mercy. Flaccus, a nobleman, who had been the cause of the martyrdom of Felicula, hearing of this deed of Nicomede, ordered him to be led to an altar, and to offer sacrifice to the gods. He refused to deny Christ, and was beaten to death with whips loaded with lead. His body was thrown into the Tiber, but a priest named Justus recovered it, and buried it in hallowed earth, near the Via Nomentana. His martyrdom took place on the 15th of September, on which day it is commemorated in the

Sacramentary of S. Gregory, and in many of the Martyrologies. The 1st of June was observed at Rome in memory of the dedication of a church in his honour. On this day also the English Church has for many ages remembered him, as well as on September 15th. Pope Boniface V. consecrated a cemetery at Rome, in 620, which bore the name of S. Nicomede.

The Sixt had charge of them now being dead,
 In seemely sort their corses to engrave,
 And deck with dainty flowres their brydall bed,
 That to their heavenly Spouse both sweet and brave
 They might appeare, when He their soules shall save.
 The wondrous workmanship of God's owne mould,
 Whose face He made all beastes to feare, and gave
 All in his hand, even dead we honour should.
 Ah, dearest God, me graunt I dead be not defould !
 Faerie Queene, B. i. c. x. 42.

JUNE 5.

S. Boniface, Archbishop and Martyr.

755.

S. BONIFACE, the Apostle of Germany, as he is called, was born at Kirton or Crediton, in Devonshire, in the year 680. His English name was Winfred. He was trained from his early years in the monastery of Exeter, and he afterwards removed to Nutcell, a religious house in the diocess of Winchester, which was destroyed by the Danes, and was never rebuilt. There he applied himself to the study of science, and especially to the interpretation of Holy Scripture. In due time he was promoted to direct the education of others. When he was

about thirty years of age, he was ordained priest, and began with great zeal to instruct the people, and to labour for the salvation of souls. The bishops of the province having been hastily summoned to meet in council, without waiting for the leave of Brithwald the primate, Boniface was sent to Canterbury to give an explanation, and to report their proceedings. He discharged the duty so well, that the bishops frequently afterwards called him to their councils.

From his youth, his ardent desire had been to carry the Gospel into pagan countries. In 716, he, with great difficulty, obtained leave from his abbat to pass into Friseland, accompanied by only two monks. Radbod the king of the country was a heathen, though many of his subjects had been converted by S. Willebrord bishop of Utrecht and S. Wulfran archbishop of Sens. But the country was then distracted by war; and the king having declared his determination to live and die in the religion of his ancestors, Boniface found no opportunity for executing his pious designs, and returned home. The abbat of Nutcell dying soon after, he was elected in his place, but refused to accept the office. In 719 he obtained letters from Daniel bishop of Winchester, and went to Rome to offer himself to Pope Gregory II. as a missionary. After reading the letters which he had brought, and conversing with him, Gregory approved of his undertaking, and gave him a commission to preach and baptize in any infidel countries whither he might choose to go. He dismissed him with his blessing, and the gift of some precious relics, and begged him to inform him,

from time to time, of whatever might be necessary for the completion of his design.

He was honourably received, on his way through Lombardy, by King Luitprand; and passed onwards till he arrived in Bavaria and Thuringia, where he began his labours. Those countries were not altogether pagan, but the true religion had become nearly extinct, owing to a careless and dissolute clergy, and the false teachers who had usurped their place. Hearing of the death of Radbod, Boniface rejoiced that a door was opened for the faith into Friseland, and he hastened thither, to join S. Willebrord. They were assisted by the protection of Charles Martel, Prince of France, and Maire du Palais, as he was called, who, by the death of the king, had become master of Friseland. S. Boniface laboured for three years in this country, in company with S. Willebrord, and made many converts to the faith, overturning the idol temples, and building churches. He wrote an account of his success to Edburga, an abbess in Kent, and begged her to send him a book of the Acts of the martyrs. In return, she sent him a present of money for his churches, and a rich covering for an altar, and entreated his prayers for the soul of a deceased relation.

S. Willebrord wished to consecrate his companion as his coadjutor and successor, but his great humility made him shrink from the honour. The fear of being compelled to receive it was probably the reason of his asking leave to go into the eastern part of Germany, to carry the Gospel still further among its rude people. S. Willebrord consented, and gave him his benediction. He went into Hessia and

Saxony, and converted many thousands. On his journey he came to a convent of nuns at Falz, near Treves; for even into that savage region the holy religious had penetrated. He was hospitably entertained by Adela the abbess, and after saying mass, which he did almost daily, he sat down to a refecton with the community. During the repast, Gregory, a youth about fifteen years of age, nephew of the abbess, read aloud a lesson from Holy Scripture. He had only lately returned from school and from court, to visit his relation. The priest said to him, You read well, my son, do you understand what you read? He replied that he did, and began again to read. Boniface stopped him, and asked him to express the meaning in his own words. The youth feared to do so before such a company, and the missionary himself explained to them what they had heard. His discourse so touched the heart of Gregory, that he begged leave from the abbess to be allowed to follow his instructor, which she permitted, though with some difficulty, as Boniface was quite a stranger to her. He became a holy abbat at Utrecht, and made a blessed end in 776.

As S. Boniface and his disciples travelled through Thuringia, they found the country so poor, and so wasted by war, that they were often obliged to labour with their hands for their support. They had also frequently to conceal themselves from pagans. Still they persevered, gaining new converts as they went on. In 723 Boniface sent some of his company to Rome to report to Pope Gregory the progress which he had made, and to ask his advice in many points of discipline and government. Gregory bade him come

himself to Rome ; and he arrived there in the same year, attended by many of his disciples. The pope took him apart, and examined him upon the doctrines of the Faith, and made him write a confession of his belief. On the feast of S. Andrew he consecrated him bishop, after binding him by a solemn oath to preserve the Faith inviolate, and to yield obedience to the Roman see. A copy of this engagement Boniface wrote with his own hand, and laid it upon the tomb of S. Peter. Gregory gave him a book of canons for his guidance, and furnished him with letters to Prince Charles Martel ; to the bishops, clergy, and laity ; to the clergy who were to be under his care ; and to the pagans. Charles Martel gave him a safe conduct through France, till he arrived in Hessa. He resumed his labours by confirming many persons who had been already baptized. He cut down a great tree, called the oak of Jupiter, which the pagans had long regarded with superstitious reverence, and used the wood in building an oratory in honour of S. Peter. Daniel bishop of Winchester, hearing of his consecration, sent him a letter, containing many valuable rules for his conduct in missionary countries ; and a few years later he made him a present of some books, and encouraged him to continue steadfast, reminding him of the example of the saints. Boniface seems to have kept up a frequent correspondence with his friends in England.

On his arrival in Thuringia, he invited the princes and nobles of that country to return to the Faith. For it had been introduced by Theodric, son of Clovis II., when he conquered the province ; but since the de-

cline of the French power, the people had fallen under the dominion of the pagan Saxons. Heresy, also, and the scandalous lives of some who taught the true faith, had corrupted the few who still professed it. S. Boniface set himself in earnest to restore the ancient discipline, and at length succeeded, notwithstanding many great difficulties and hardships. He rebuilt many churches, and founded a monastery, in honour of the archangel S. Michael, at Ordorf. He wrote frequently to Rome, during the three years which followed his consecration, for advice in many cases of difficulty. The fame of his mission drew many servants of Christ from Britain, who crossed over into Hessa and Thuringia, to assist in the holy cause. Many religious women, as well as monks, went from England, to establish convents in those countries.

In 731 Gregory III. was elected to fill the see of Rome, which had become vacant by the death of his predecessor. S. Boniface sent deputies to assure him of his obedience, and to give him a history of the mission. The pope sent him the pallium, and the title of archbishop, and gave him authority to consecrate bishops where they were needed. He desired him to provide two or three other bishops to assist at those consecrations. Boniface, being thus encouraged, built two churches, one at Frislar in honour of SS. Peter and Paul, and another at Hamenbourg in honour of S. Michael. To each of them a monastery was attached.

He made a third journey to Rome in 738, and was received by Gregory and his clergy with great honour. He remained in Italy nearly a year, and

persuaded many English priests who were then at Rome to accompany him back to Germany. His first act on his return was to divide Bavaria into dioceses, and to consecrate bishops over them. These arrangements Gregory III. confirmed. In 741 Charles Martel died, and was buried in the abbey of S. Denys, near Paris. His two sons, Carloman and Pepin, succeeded to his power. Carloman inherited Lorraine and the German possessions ; while his brother obtained for his share Burgundy and Provence. Pope Gregory III. died in the same year, and was succeeded by Zachary, a Greek by birth. Boniface did not fail to tender his allegiance, and reported the erection of several new bishoprics in Germany. He found a willing assistant in the young prince Carloman, who sent an earnest request to Rome that a council of the German Church might be assembled. Zachary gave his permission ; and added many minute directions regarding the best means of restraining some clerks and laics who then disturbed the peace of the infant Church. "As for the rest," he said to the unwearied missionary, "take courage. Work the work to which God has called you. A great reward awaits you ; and sinners as we are, we do not cease to pray God that he will finish in you what He has begun."

In 742 the first council of the German Church assembled. Its place of meeting is not known. Boniface presided as primate and legate of the Roman see, and there were present six bishops and their priests. They enacted several canons, chiefly relating to discipline, which were confirmed by the pope. By the first of these, as Collier remarks,

the Roman see was declared to be the center of unity; subjection to S. Peter and his vicar was decreed; and metropolitans were directed to apply to Rome for their palls¹. A council of the bishops and clergy was appointed to meet annually; and the rule of S. Benedict was for the first time made binding upon the religious. S. Boniface sent a history of this council to Cuthbert archbishop of Canterbury, in return for letters and presents which he had received from England. In the following year the annual council met at Leptines or Estines, in Hainault.

A council of the French Church assembled in 744 at Soissons. It seems probable that S. Boniface presided there also. It was occupied with the trial and condemnation of Adalbert and Clement, two heretical impostors. Adalbert pretended to possess miraculous powers, such as belong to none but God; and Clement had seduced many persons from the faith by his false doctrine. They were finally condemned by the council of Rome in 745.

In 745, S. Boniface wrote a letter to Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, rebuking him for his scandalous life, and urging him to penitence. He wrote also to request Egbert archbishop of York to send him some of the works of Ven. Bede. In this year he was appointed to the diocese of Mentz, on the deposition of the former bishop for killing the murderer of his father; and the see was raised to the metropolitan dignity. Before this he had possessed no fixed diocese. As the German Church increased,

¹ Eccl. Hist. B. ii. p. 128.

other sees were invested with the metropolitan rank ; but among these Mentz retains the primacy. It originally possessed jurisdiction over thirteen bishoprics.

S. Boniface in the year 746 founded the Benedictine monastery of Fulda, on the confines of Bavaria. It became the most famous school in the West, during that age and the next. The first superior was S. Sturmius, a Bavarian, who had been educated in the convent at Frislar, and after searching for some time for a suitable situation, at last, with the consent of Boniface, began to build on the banks of the river Fulda. The pope endowed it with singular privileges, and granted it full exemption from all episcopal jurisdiction, except that of the Roman see. This seems to be the first instance which has been recorded of such a remarkable liberty having been given. In later ages it became very general. The superior of Fulda is now a prince of the empire, and is styled primate of all the abbats of Germany.

Prince Carloman about this time withdrew from the world, and made a profession of the religious life in a monastery near Rome. He afterwards retired for greater privacy to the Benedictine house at Monte Cassino, and ended his days in peace at Vienne in 755. His brother Pepin thus became sole prince of the extensive dominions in Germany and France which Charles Martel had bequeathed. For nearly a century, the French kings had been weak and indolent, and the sovereign authority had been intrusted to the Maire du Palais. This office, after having been the cause of many wars, had become hereditary before the time of Charles Martel.

The people therefore petitioned pope Zachary that the title of king might be given to him who already possessed the power. Childeric III., the last of the Merovingian dynasty, seems to have yielded up a distinction which he was unable to defend, and died in the monastery of Sitiu in 754. Zachary granted the request of the French nation, and Pepin with his queen was solemnly crowned at Soissons, on the 1st of March, 752, by Boniface, in the midst of an august assembly of the bishops and nobility of the kingdom. This was the beginning of the Carlovingian dynasty, though it took its name from Charles Martel. It lasted till the end of the tenth century. In 987, Hugh Capet founded a new race of kings, a branch of which is still represented by the lineal descendant of King Charles X.

In 752 Zachary died, and Stephen II. was elected to fill the vacant see. The Lombards were then at war with Rome, and the pope was reduced to great straits. He therefore undertook a journey into France, to solicit aid from King Pepin. As he approached Pontyon, a royal palace near Langres, the king came out to receive him, and prostrated himself before him ; and, without allowing him to alight, walked by the side of his horse till he arrived at the castle. This remarkable event happened on the feast of the Epiphany, 754. Stephen continued his journey to the abbey of S. Denys, where he crowned Pepin, his queen, and his two sons, Charlemagne and Carloman. The reason of this second coronation is not well ascertained. Perhaps it was because the throne of France was not vacant till the death of Childeric in that year. During his stay at S. Denys,

the pope was seized with dangerous illness, and his life was despaired of. Out of gratitude to S. Denys for his recovery, he granted many privileges to the abbey, and left his pallium upon the altar of the church. He returned to Rome after accomplishing the chief object of his journey.

In 755 Boniface consecrated Lullus as his successor in the see of Mentz, in virtue of the power which pope Zachary had given him in 745, and which had been confirmed by Stephen. Lullus was an Englishman, and had formerly been a monk of Malmesbury. His appointment was sanctioned by the pope, King Pepin, and the bishops and clergy. Boniface had thus lived to see the Church firmly established in Germany, and, as he reminded Stephen in a letter which he wrote about this time, he had been papal legate in that country for thirty-six years. But one desire remained unsatisfied, to lay down his life for Christ. He therefore resumed his missionary labours, and as he was departing from Mentz he said to Lullus, "The time of my death approaches, I pray you to finish the churches which I have begun in Thuringia, and labour for the conversion of the people. And bury my body in the church of Fulda."

He descended the Rhine to Friseland, in company with Eoban bishop of Utrecht, and twelve priests, deacons and monks. They gained many disciples, and built churches on the ruins of the idol temples. A day was appointed for the new converts to assemble to receive confirmation, on the banks of the river Bourde. Suddenly the little band was surrounded by a troop of savage pagans, who rushed upon them

sword in hand. The Christians at first tried to oppose them by force ; but Boniface hearing the tumult, understood that the ardent desire of his life was about to be granted, and came out of the tent bearing the holy relics in his hand. "Cease to fight, my children," he cried, "the Scripture forbids us to render evil for evil. The day has come which I have long expected ; hope in God and He will save your souls." The pagans immediately overpowered them, and put fifty-two of them to death. Thus the blessed archbishop received his crown, on the 5th of June, 755. The spot where the martyrs fell is not known.

The pagans thinking that the chests, in which the relics and books were carried, contained valuable treasure, began to fight among themselves for the possession of them, and several were killed. When they discovered nothing but books and relics, they scattered them about the fields, and hid them in ditches and marshes. The Christians of Utrecht came soon after and carried away the body of S. Boniface to their city. Lullus translated it to Mentz, and it was finally laid in the abbey church of Fulda. The place where his remains rest has been the scene of innumerable miracles. Some of the books were recovered, and have been preserved in this monastery. One of them is a book of the Gospels written in the saint's own hand. Not long after his decease another company of missionaries finished the pious work which he had begun in Friseland. In the year 756, Cuthbert archbishop of Canterbury ordained in a council of the English Church that the day of the martyrdom of the blessed Boni-

face should be celebrated annually on the 5th of June.

S. Boniface has left few writings behind him, except his letters. A treatise on the duties of bishops and priests is attributed to him. In it he recommends conditional baptism in all cases of doubt, and gives rules for hearing confessions. His life was written by S. Willibald bishop of Eichstad, one of his disciples.

I saw thee once, and nought discerned
For stranger to admire ;
A serious aspect, but it burned
With no unearthly fire.

Again I saw, and I confessed
Thy speech was rare and high ;
And yet it vexed my burdened breast,
And scared, I knew not why.

I saw once more, and awe-struck gazed
On face, and form, and air ;
God's living glory round thee blazed—
A Saint—a Saint was there !

Lyra Apostolica, p. 70.

JUNE 17.

S. Alban, Martyr.

303.

HISTORIANS are not agreed about the time when the Christian Faith was first preached in Britain. There seems to be good reason for believing that it was during the age of the Apostles. But whether S. Peter, S. Paul, or S. Joseph of Arimathea was the first missionary, it is certain that, towards the end of

the second century, Lucius, a sovereign prince of Britain, was converted, and sent to the Bishop of Rome for instruction. And in the tenth general persecution which afflicted the Catholic Church under Dioclesian and Maximian, in the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth, England was honoured to make a devout confession for God. This persecution was more cruel, and lasted longer, than any that had gone before it. It began in the East, and spread gradually westwards, and seems to have reached this country in the year 303. Constantius Chlorus, the father of the emperor Constantine the Great, was then governor of Britain, under Maximian. He secretly favoured the Christians, but did not dare openly to disobey the edicts of the emperor. The storm fell with great fury upon the British Church, and as Ven. Bede relates, "the proscription of innocent persons, the burning of churches, and the executions of the martyrs, continued for a while without ceasing." Those who escaped with their lives retired to the woods and deserts to await the return of peaceful times, which took place, in the Western Church, on the abdication of Dioclesian and his colleague in 305.

It was in this persecution that S. Alban, the Protomartyr of Britain, suffered; of whom Fortunatus, a Christian poet and bishop of Poitiers in the beginning of the seventh century, says, *Albanum egregium fœcunda Britannia profert*—Britain, fruitful in martyrs, first offers the renowned Alban. He was a native of Verolamium, a city of considerable importance in the time of the Romans. It was called by the Saxons Uverlamacestir or Uvarlinga-

cestir, and the site of its ruins is near the present town of S. Alban's. The saint was of noble family, and had travelled to Rome for his education. When the storm of persecution first reached Britain, he was a pagan, devoted to the idolatrous worship of his ancestors. A Christian priest, who was flying for life, came to his house, and begged for shelter. He received him, and entertained him hospitably. The time of the holy man was spent in continual prayer and watching, night and day. Alban was so charmed by his demeanour, that he asked to be instructed in the faith of the Christians. As his guest unfolded to him the mystery of godliness, his heart was touched by Divine grace, and with many tears he renounced the errors of paganism, and professed his belief in the religion of the Cross. He was admitted into the Church by the sacrament of regeneration; and the holy father remained with him for some days longer, to finish the work of instruction which he had begun. Thus were fulfilled the words of the Saviour, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." Alban, while a pagan, had shown kindness to the Lord in one of His persecuted disciples, and was rewarded by the grace of faith, and the crown of martyrdom.

It was not long before the retreat of the Christian priest was made known to the governor of Verulamium, who sent a party of soldiers to take him. When Alban heard of their coming, he assisted his guest to escape by covering him with his own cloak; and he went out to meet the soldiers, wearing the caracalla, or long garment, which had belonged to the priest. He was immediately seized and bound, and

led before the judge, who was at that instant standing by an altar, sacrificing to the demons. "When he saw Alban," says Venerable Bede, "he was enraged beyond measure, because he had dared to surrender himself voluntarily to the soldiers, and had given himself up to danger instead of his guest; so he ordered him to be brought before the images of the demons, which he himself was worshipping—'Because you have chosen to conceal a rebel and a sacrilegious person,' he said, 'rather than give him up to the soldiers, that he might suffer the punishment due to his impiety, as a blasphemer of the gods, you must undergo the tortures due to him, if you dare to depart from the worship of our religion.' But S. Alban, who had freely confessed to the persecutors of the faith that he was a Christian, did not in the least fear the threats of the judge; but, girded with the armour of a spiritual soldier, declared openly that he would not obey his orders. Then said the judge, 'Of what family or kindred are you?' And Alban answered, 'What does it signify from what stock I am descended? But if you desire to hear the truth of my religion, know that I am a Christian, and that I will join only in the Christian worship.' Then said the judge, 'What is your name? I command you to tell it me without delay.' And he replied, 'I am called Alban by my parents; and I always adore and worship the true and living God, who created the worlds.' Then the judge was full of fury, and cried out, 'If you would enjoy the happiness of eternal life, delay not to sacrifice to the great gods.' But Alban answered, 'These sacrifices which you offer to demons can neither assist those who offer them, nor

can they grant the desires and prayers of their suppliants. Nay, more than this, whoever sacrifices to those idols shall receive the eternal punishment of hell for his reward.'

"When the judge heard this, his fury was without bounds, and he ordered the holy confessor of God to be scourged by the torturers, thinking to bend the constancy of his heart by stripes, since he could not by words. But when his sufferings were most severe, the martyr bore them patiently, yea, joyfully, for the sake of his Lord. And when the judge saw that he could not be overcome by torture, and would not renounce the Christian worship, he commanded that he should be beheaded. As he was led to death, he came to a river whose rapid current separated the city wall from the opposite bank, where he was to suffer. He saw a vast multitude of men and women, who had come together, no doubt by a divine instinct, to encourage the blessed confessor and martyr; and they so crowded the bridge over this river, that the whole company could hardly have passed before the evening. Nearly all the inhabitants had come out to see, and the judge remained unattended within the city. S. Alban then, whose soul burned with desire to arrive quickly at his martyrdom, and yet was delayed by the torrent, raised his eyes to heaven, and presently he beheld the stream fall back, and open a way for him to pass. And when the executioner, among others, saw this, he hastened to meet him, as he came towards the place where he was to die, and moved by divine grace, he threw away his sword which he had held drawn in his hand; and he prayed to be allowed to suffer either with the martyr whom he had been ordered to put to

death, or in his stead. While thus, from being a persecutor, he became a companion of the true faith, and while there was some delay among the executioners, owing to the sword having been thrown away, the venerable confessor of God ascended the hill with a great crowd of people.

“It was a fitting spot of rare beauty, about fifty paces from the river’s bank, adorned or rather clothed with many kinds of flowers; there was no sudden steepness, no ruggedness, but the natural slope was smooth and gentle on every side. As if Nature had once made it so lovely that it might be worthy of being consecrated by the blood of a blessed martyr. While he stood on the top of this mount, S. Alban prayed to God to give him a little water, and immediately a fountain sprung up at his feet, which has flowed ever since, that all might know that the river also had done honour to the martyr. That river returned to its natural channel when its service was no longer needed.

“The glorious martyr was then beheaded, and immediately received the crown of life which God has promised to them that love Him. But he who laid hands on his holy head was not allowed to rejoice over his fallen victim. For his eyes fell to the ground with the head of the blessed martyr. The soldier also who had been converted by divine mercy, and had refused to strike the holy confessor of God, was beheaded along with him. Of whom it is certain, that though he had not been regenerated in the font of Baptism, yet, being purified in the laver of his blood, he became worthy of entering the heavenly kingdom.

“Then the judge gave orders that the persecutions

should cease, for he was astonished by the novelty of such heavenly miracles. For he began to see that the saints counted death an honour, instead of being forced by it to give up their devotion to the faith of Christ.

“The blessed Alban suffered on the 22nd of June, near the city of Verolanium, where afterwards, when peaceful times returned, a church of glorious form was built, worthy of his martyrdom. In this place the cure of the sick, and the performance of frequent miracles, cease not at this day to be witnessed. There suffered also at the same time Aaron and Julius, citizens of Caerleon, and many other men and women in different places. They were tortured in many cruel ways, and their limbs were torn and mangled in a manner unheard of; and having finished their agony, their souls were dismissed to the joys of the city above.

“When the storm of persecution had abated, the faithful ones of Christ came forth again in public, from their hiding-places in the forests and deserts and secret caves, which had concealed them in the time of danger; and they rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground, and founded, and built, and beautified the shrines of the martyrs; and showed them openly as banners of victory; and commemorated their festival days, and celebrated the sacred mysteries with clean hearts and lips. And this time of peace lasted in the churches of Christ which were in Britain till the appearance of the Arian heresy².”

The miraculous circumstances of S. Alban's martyrdom are attested by many ancient historians.

² Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. vii. viii.

Collier, after mentioning their names, remarks, "As for S. Alban's miracles, being attested by authors of such antiquity and credit, I do not see why they should be questioned. That miracles were wrought in the Church at this time of day, is clear from the writings of the ancients. To suppose there are no miracles but those in the Bible, is to believe too little. To imagine that God should exert His omnipotence, and appear supernaturally for His servants in no place but Jewry, and in no age since the Apostles, is an unreasonable fancy: for since the world was not all converted in the Apostles' time, and God designed the further enlargement of His Church, why should we not believe He should give the pagans the highest proof of the truth of Christianity, and honour His servants with the most undisputed credentials. Now if this is very reasonable to suppose, why should S. Alban's miracles be disbelieved, the occasion being great enough for such an extraordinary interposition? For, by this means the martyr must have been mightily supported, the British Christians fortified against the persecution, and the pagans surprised into a conversion³."

The spiritual father of the saint, as the holy priest who baptized him is called in the language of early times, escaped into Wales, and after converting many to the true Faith, received the crown of martyrdom in the same persecution. His name is supposed by some historians to have been Amphibalus, though others allege that this was only an epithet borrowed from the cloak which he wore.

³ Eccl. Hist. B. i. p. 22.

The remains of the blessed Alban were buried in the place where he suffered. It was called by the Anglo-Saxons Holmhurst, or the woody place, and in later times Derswoldwood; and the present town of S. Alban's is built upon it. When the Gallican bishops, Germanus and Lupus, came into Britain in the fifth century, to stay the progress of the Pelagian heresy, they held a great conference at S. Alban's, where its supporters were refuted, and the Faith was established by the evidence of miracles. "They gave thanks to God," says Ven. Bede, "through the holy martyr Alban; and Germanus, who had brought with him relics of the Apostles and of many martyrs, after praying, ordered the sepulchre of the proto-martyr to be opened, and placed in it the precious treasure; for he deemed it fitting that the bones which had been gathered in different countries should rest in one tomb, since they had belonged to saints who had been received with equal honour in heaven. He accordingly laid them with great reverence in the spot where the blood of the blessed martyr had been shed, and he carried away a handful of dust, which still preserved the colour of blood⁴."

The church, which had been built in memory of S. Alban, was destroyed by the Saxons, and his precious remains were left for many years in an un-honoured tomb. Offa, king of Mercia, was divinely admonished, as it is related, in 793, to take them up and translate them to a worthier place. He built a noble church, and founded a monastery for a hundred monks, probably of the Benedictine order. In 930

⁴ Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. xviii.

it was attacked by the Danes, and some of the relics of the saint were carried off to Denmark, and enshrined in a monastery in that country; but they were afterwards restored.

The abbey of S. Alban's was in later ages one of the noblest in England. It was governed by the Benedictine rule, and was honoured by many popes and kings with singular privileges. Its lands were exempted from the payment of Romescot, or Peter-pence. Its superior was a mitred abbat of parliament, and enjoyed precedence of all others, by a special grant in 1154 from Pope Adrian IV., who was born near S. Alban's. The church was built at various times, by the munificence of successive abbats, from Paul de Caen in 1077, to John de Wheathamstead in 1440. The oldest part was solemnly consecrated in 1115, in presence of King Henry I., his queen, and many of the nobility. In 1129, the relics of S. Alban were removed by abbat Geoffrey de Gorham, to a splendid shrine which he had prepared for them. On that joyous occasion, three hundred poor persons were entertained in the court of the abbey. In 1166 the shrine was still further enriched with gold and precious ornaments by abbat Simon. It was a favourite resort of pilgrims for many ages. The choir was built in the middle of the thirteenth century, the Ladye chapel in the beginning of the fourteenth, and the unrivalled altar screen was the gift of abbat John de Wheathamstead and abbat Wallingford, in the following age. This church possessed a superb font of brass, which Sir Richard Lea, a knight, had brought from Scotland. Many illustrious persons are buried within its walls; for "the churches belonging to abbeys and

monasteries," says Staveley, "were ever in reputation above ordinary parochial churches, and especially in matters of sepulture; for observable is it, that our ancestors generally desired to be buried in a monastery, rather than in a parish church, in confidence of some benefit to their souls in the other state, by the prayers of the Professed there, who usually prayed for the souls of such as were buried within their limits⁵." One of the most remarkable of these tombs is that of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, surnamed the Good, who was regent during the minority of King Henry VI., and died by violence, as it was supposed, in 1446.

In 1539, the abbey-lands passed into the possession of the commissioners of King Henry VIII. The church was afterwards doomed to destruction, but was saved by the townsmen of S. Alban's, who purchased it for four hundred pounds. And the devout stranger who would now visit the tomb of the proto-martyr will find, instead of the glorious shrine, a mean stone, and no hooded brother to bid him welcome for the love of God and of S. Alban. And as he turns away in sorrow from the desolate place, where the dust of the holy martyr still reposes, he may perchance think within himself, that God has a more grievous scourge for a faithless people than the iron rod of a pagan emperor.

The memory of S. Alban was always honoured in England on the 22nd of June, the day of his martyrdom, till the reign of King Edward VI. The reason of the day being changed to the 17th of June on the restoration of his name to the Kalendar in

⁵ History of English Churches.

1662, does not appear. This is another instance of the failure of Mr. Wheatley's theory.

To us the places where your ashes lie
Shall be as altars, whence shall steadier rise
Our prayers to heaven ; and that blest Sacrifice,
Where God the Victim cometh down from high,
Shall consecrate to holier mystery ;
He here accepts your deaths as joined with His,
Here builds all in one body, and supplies
Our dying frames with immortality.

And hence your graves become a tower of aid,
A refuge from bad thoughts, a sacred shade ;
Until, fresh clad with new and wondrous dowers,
Our flesh shall join the angelic choirs, and be
A living temple crowned with heavenly towers ;
Where evermore the praises shall ascend
Of the Great undivided One and Three,
And God be all in all, world without end.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 267.

JUNE 20.

Translation of S. Edward, King and Martyr.

980.

WHEN the body of S. Edward had lain for a little time in its obscure grave at Werham, we have seen—March 18th—how honourably, it was distinguished by miracles. Queen Elfrida, whose ambition had been the cause of his death, could no longer resist the will of God, and gave orders that it should be translated with becoming reverence to Shaftesbury, anciently called Sceptonia. Elferius, duke of Mercia, was appointed to perform this duty. He had taken

the part of the secular clergy in the fierce disputes which they had with the monks, and had destroyed nearly all the monasteries which Ethelwold bishop of Winchester had built in Mercia. And within a year after the translation of S. Edward he came to a miserable end.

In obedience to the orders of the queen, he took up the holy body, and carried it to the convent of the Benedictine nuns at Shaftesbury, where it was enshrined. Some historians say that S. Dunstan assisted. This convent had been founded by King Alfred in 888, or, as it has been supposed with less probability, by Elgiva wife of King Edmund. It was at first dedicated in honour of the B. Virgin Mary; and after the translation of S. Edward it was placed under their united invocation. Hence in ancient chronicles the superior is styled "Abbatissa de S. Eduardo."

"At Shaftesbury," says William of Malmesbury, "there shines the splendid mirror of royal sanctity; for to his merits it is due that a large choir of women devoted to God, illuminate the surrounding country with the brightness of religion, which reaches even to the stars. There dwell holy virgins, and widows who after their loss have known no second love, in whose manners such gentle modesty and severe elegance unite as nothing can surpass.... Hence they are not too credulous who say, that by the prayers of such religious the world is sustained, when it is already tottering under its crimes."

This translation is commemorated in the Anglican Kalendar on the 20th of June. The memory of another translation of S. Edward was anciently observed on

18th of February, and some modern historians
at incorrectly that the latter was in honour of the
loval to Shaftesbury, while the other, on the 20th
June, was in commemoration of a translation of the
y body to Glastonbury. But there is no reason
suppose that the body of S. Edward was ever at
lastonbury⁶.

Yet for their bones meek Piety shall plead,
Blest Piety, which honoureth the dead !
Though scattered far and wide, yet God's own eye
Doth keep them that they perish not ; and when
The promised hour shall come, their God again
Shall gather them, and as He builds on high
His habitation, each there, moulded by His grace,
Shall live and find a sure abiding place.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 266.

⁶ Dugdale. Tanner.

JULY.

JULY 2.

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

ON this day the Church commemorates the visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin S. Elizabeth, immediately after the Annunciation of the birth of the Redeemer. That part of the holy Gospel according to S. Luke in which it is related, is sung in the Latin Church on this feast, as it was anciently in the Church of England. God send us grace to read it with pure hearts and lips.

“ And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, ‘Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy saluta-

tion sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.'

"And Mary said, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on them that fear Him, from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy; as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever.' And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house⁶."

When the angel had announced to the Blessed Virgin the secret purpose of God regarding her, he added for the confirmation of her faith that her cousin Elizabeth had "conceived a son in her old age, and that it was then the sixth month with her who was called barren⁷." Accordingly, as soon as he had departed from her, she hastened to salute Elizabeth, not, as S. Ambrose remarks, because she doubted the truth of what she had heard, but because she desired to share the joy of her cousin. It is also observed by Origen,

⁶ St. Luke i. 39—56.

⁷ Ver. 36.

that "Jesus, who was then conceived in her womb, hastened to sanctify John in the womb of his mother." This opinion is confirmed by S. Ambrose, who alleges it as a reason for supposing that the blessed Virgin was present at the birth of S. John Baptist. "If at her first coming," he says, "such was its effect, that at the salutation of Mary the babe leaped for joy, and his mother was filled with the Holy Ghost, of how great service may we suppose the presence of holy Mary, for so long a time, to have been. For not her relationship only is the cause of her stay, but the advantage of so great a prophet."

The house of Zacharias was probably in Hebron, which was one of the cities of the priests, as we learn from the book of Joshua⁸. Thus, from her own home at Nazareth, S. Mary had to travel nearly the whole length of Judea. When she arrived in the house of her cousin, she was silent regarding the great things which God had done to herself, till they were revealed to S. Elizabeth by the Holy Ghost. And when the mother of the Baptist in the words of inspiration hailed her as the Mother of her Lord, she gave utterance to the joy of her holy soul in the divine hymn which the Church has for many ages sung in her evening office. "Not only in her silence is the humility of Mary commended to us," says S. Bernard, "but it is proclaimed more evidently in her words. She was told that the Holy One should be born of her, and she answered only that she was His hand-maiden. Then she came to Elizabeth, to whom the singular glory of the Virgin was immediately revealed

⁸ xxi. 8—11. compared with S. Luke i. 5.

by the Spirit, and who admired the person of her who visited her, and said, Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? She also commended the voice of her who saluted her, adding, As soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And she blessed the faith of her who believed, saying, Blessed is she that believeth, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. These are great praises; but the devout humility of Mary could retain nothing for herself, but rather gave all to Him whose benefits towards her were commended. Thou magnifiest the Mother of the Lord, she said, but my soul doth magnify the Lord. Thou sayest that thy son rejoiced at the sound of my voice, but my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; and he indeed, as the friend of the Bridegroom, greatly rejoiceth at the Bridegroom's voice. Thou sayest, Blessed is she that believed; the cause of her faith and of her blessedness is the regard of the Divine goodness, so that from henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed, because He hath regarded the low estate of His hand-maiden.

“Are we then to think, brethren, that the holy Elizabeth erred in what she uttered through the Spirit. Far otherwise. Blessed indeed is she whom God hath regarded, and blessed is she that believed. For this is the great fruit of the Divine regard. By the ineffable operation of the Holy Ghost upon so great humility, such magnanimity grew up in the inner heart of the Virgin, that they became like stars, each the brighter for the presence of the other. For neither did such humility lessen the magnanimity,

nor did this, albeit so great, diminish the humility. The prerogative of Divine grace brings it to pass, in the hearts of the elect, that neither does the humility make them faint-hearted, nor the magnanimity arrogant; but they rather co-operate with each other, so that not only does no pride arise from the magnanimity, but the humility is greatly advanced by it, and they are found so much the more timorous, and the less ungrateful to the Giver of every blessing; and on the other hand no cowardice creeps in with the humility; but the more they have learnt to distrust themselves, even in the least things, so much the more do they confide in the Divine strength even in the greatest¹."

To the holy alone it belongs to celebrate the praises of the Blessed Virgin. But, at the infinite distance which separates us from her sinless purity, let us rather imitate her example, and meditate in silence on the wonderful goodness of God towards her. Few of the events of her life are recorded in Holy Scripture; for, as it is written in the book of Psalms, those who fear the Lord "He shall hide privily by His own presence from the provoking of all men, and shall keep them secretly in His tabernacle from the strife of tongues." But enough is known of her history to serve as a pattern of the humility and patient charity which should adorn the servants of the Lord Jesus. For we are taught by S. Paul to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." To us also it belongs, as bishop Pearson remarks, "perpetually to preserve an esteem of her person proportionable to so high a dignity. It was

¹ Sermo de Beata Virgine.

her own prediction, From henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed ; but the obligation is ours to call and esteem her so. If Elizabeth cried out with so loud a voice, 'Blessed art thou among women,' when Christ was but newly conceived in her womb ; what expressions of honour and admiration can we think sufficient, now that Christ is in heaven, and that Mother with Him. Far be it from any Christian to derogate from that special privilege granted her, which is incommunicable to any other. We cannot bear too reverend a regard unto the Mother of our Lord, so long as we give her not that worship which is due unto the Lord Himself. Let us keep the language of the primitive Church, 'Let her be honoured and esteemed ; let Him be worshipped and adored'.¹ "

To the daughters of the Catholic Church especially, the example of the blessed Mary appeals with an irresistible persuasion, far more eloquent than words. And not in vain ; as the grateful remembrance of living eye-witnesses at this hour can attest, no less than the many tender histories of their gentle and sublime devotion in ages past. "Such were the women of the Catholic type," says an eloquent author, "who could soften the hearts of obdurate men, and fill their souls with infinite and truly divine pity ; who could suggest to the poet of the twelfth century that exquisite line, "The virtues of the Maiden made other ladies fair ;" who could inspire a Gerson and a S. Bonaventura with the thought that there never was such an antidote to the fascination of sin as the beauteous face of the Blessed Virgin, which presented, as S. Ambrose

¹ Exposition of the Creed, Art. 3.

and S. Jerom said, the image of her soul ;—women upon whom the ideal of Mary shed so sweet a light of sanctity, and who in return could enable men to understand, and in some measure to behold, what was the innocence, and piety, and grace, of that divine Mother ;—women who may often be represented, like S. Elizabeth in the old paintings, adorned with three crowns, to denote, that as virgins, wives, and widows, their conversation was always most holy. These were in truth beings of a new creation, the fruits of that faith which could remove mountains, and of that Spirit which renews the face of the earth¹.”

The Song of the Blessed Virgin is the earliest of those evangelical hymns which the Holy Spirit has given to the Church, and which her children will sing in the daily Office till the end of time. It is on account of this Song that S. Augustin and an author in the third century speak of S. Mary as one of the holy prophetesses. Ven. Bede, in his commentary on the first book of Samuel, takes notice of the resemblance between the *Magnificat* and the hymn of the holy Anna. “Call to mind,” he says, “the hymn of the blessed Mary, and see how similar are the thoughts of the mother of the prophet and of the Mother of the Lord, of the wife and of the Virgin, regarding the judgments and the grace of God².” The contrast between the emotions of those holy women is full of deep instruction. She who lived under a dispensation of the types and shadows of good things to come, showed the less perfect dispositions of heart, in

Mores Catholici, B. vi. 3.

Expos. allegor. in Sam. lib. i. c. 4.

which a sincere confidence in God is yet mixed up with much that is earthly. She rejoiced indeed in the Lord, but her mouth is enlarged over her enemies. Hers is as much a song of personal triumph as of humble thanksgiving. But the blessed Maiden, in whom the Light of the Gentiles was revealed, breathes in her divine hymn no thought of herself, but inasmuch as her low estate is regarded by God her Saviour, "All generations shall call me Blessed, for He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His name."

The Feast of the Visitation was first instituted by pope Urban VI. in 1389. At that time the Western Church was torn by dissensions, and Robert de Genève, commonly called by his supporters Clement VII., had set up at Avignon a rival claim to the chair of S. Peter. The Feast was formally published to the Church by Boniface IX., in a bull dated November, 1389. It was appointed to be observed on the day after the Octave of the Nativity of S. John Baptist, in order to obtain for the Church the blessing of peace, through the prayers of the holy Virgin. This desire is breathed in the words of the collect which is used on this day; "Grant to Thy servants, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the gift of celestial grace; that to whom the child-bearing of the Blessed Virgin was the beginning of salvation, the votive solemnity of her Visitation may bring an increase of peace." It was confirmed by the council of Basle which met in 1431.

In 1610, the renowned Order of the Visitation was founded at Annecy, in honour of the Visitation of the holy Virgin, by S. Francis de Sales, and S. Jane

Frances de Chantal, its first Abbess. The holy bishop of Geneva enjoined that humility and meekness should be the basis of its rule. "In the practice of virtues," he said to the sisters, "let humility be the source of all the rest, let it be without bounds; make it the reigning principle of all your actions. Let an unalterable meekness and sweetness in all events become by habit natural to you." The great duty of constant prayer, and the mortification of the senses, even in little things, he earnestly commended to them. Speaking of the adorable Sacrifice of the Altar he said, "The holy Eucharist is the sun of spiritual exercises, the heart of devotion, the center of our divine religion. Unite your heart in it with the Church triumphant and militant, which joins itself here in one body with Christ, its sacred Head, through Him to draw down, by a holy violence, the mercy of the Father upon us." The sum of his whole rule he declared to be comprehended in these two words, "Desire nothing, refuse nothing."

Many congregations were at various times instituted in honour of the Visitation of S. Mary, by devout women in different countries, for the purpose of visiting and relieving the poor, and the sick, and prisoners.

Ye mountains, bend ye low,
O'er which the Virgin flies,
To whom the starry skies
Would their glad summits bow.

In maiden fear concealed,
Long hid in quiet home,
She now abroad doth come,
With charity her shield.

She flies without delay,—
She flies from human eyes,—
Not to be seen, she flies,
And fears lest aught betray.

Blest earth whereon she trod,
Put forth your fragrance sweet ;—
Blest hills, that felt her feet,
The Mother with her God.

More blest ye friends, whose Guest
She now doth silence break,
Of heavenly things to speak,
And where her footsteps rest.

The Father Who doth send
The Son, Who saves the lost,
The guiding Holy Ghost,
We praise Thee without end.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 218.

JULY 4.

Translation of S. Martin, Bishop and Confessor.

473.

S. MARTIN, the holy bishop of Tours, in France, died in 397, at Cande, on the borders of Anjou and Poitou. We shall learn the particulars of his life on the 11th of November, the day on which his decease is commemorated. His remains were carried to Tours, but not without opposition from the people of Poitiers, who claimed the honour of possessing them. They were attended by the inhabitants of many of

the neighbouring towns and of the adjoining country, and by a great company of monks and religious virgins. The whole city of Tours came out to meet the body of the blessed man, and bore it to a little grove without the city, at a short distance from the monastery, singing psalms and hymns, and weeping as they went, though no one doubted he had been received into glory. S. Britius, his successor, built a small chapel over the spot.

S. Perpetuus, the eighth bishop of Tours, founded a glorious church and monastery in honour of the saint, and translated the relics to a sumptuous tomb behind the high altar, on the 4th of July, 473. The assistants in this pious work were encouraged by an old man of venerable appearance, who disappeared mysteriously after it was completed, as S. Gregory of Tours relates. The Church celebrates this translation, and also the consecration of S. Martin to the office of bishop, on this day.

The tomb of S. Martin was for many ages the scene of wonderful miracles, by which God was pleased to honour the holy memory of His servant. The church where his body lay was regarded with singular devotion throughout France, and indeed over the whole of Western Europe. The monks who served it were displaced by secular canons in the seventh century. Towards the close of the following age, pope Adrian I. restored the regular canons, and Charlemagne appointed Alcuin, the learned monk of York, abbat of the house. Since the middle of the ninth century it has been occupied by seculars. From the reign of Hugh Capet, in the end of the tenth age, the king of France has been abbat and first canon ;

and besides the dignitaries of the house, there have been honorary canons, ecclesiastical and lay. Of the former number were the patriarch of Jerusalem, the archbishops of Mentz, Cologne, Compostella, Sens, and Bourges, the bishops of Liege, Strasbourg, Angers, Auxerre, and Quebec, and the abbats of Marmoutier and S. Julian at Tours. And the lay honorary canons were the dauphin, the dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, Brittany, Bourbon, Vendome, and Nevers; the counts of Flanders, Dunois, and Angouleme; and the earl of Douglas in Scotland, before that noble family renounced its ancient faith.

The Huguenots profaned the shrine, and scattered the sacred relics, but some of them were recovered; and other churches in France now possess part of them.

“In ancient times,” says Durandus, “the kings of France, when going to war, carried with them the cope or cloak of S. Martin, which was kept in a tent, called for this reason *capella*—a chapel. And the clergy who had the care of this chapel were called chaplains; and hence the name spread to other countries, and was given to other priests¹.”

“The fathers are in dust, yet live to God :”

So says the truth ; as if the motionless clay
Still held the seeds of life beneath the sod,
Smouldering and struggling till the judgment-day.

And hence we learn with reverence to esteem

Of these frail houses, though the grave confines ;
Sophist may urge his cunning tests, and deem
That they are earth ;—but they are heavenly shrines.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 38.

¹ *Rationale Div. Off.* lib. ii. c. x. 8.

JULY 15.

Translation of S. Swithun, Bishop.

971.

S. SWITHUN was born early in the ninth century, in the kingdom of the West Saxons. He was sent by his parents, when he was very young, to the monastery at Winchester. The monks of this house served the cathedral church. He was ordained priest by Helmstan, bishop of Winchester, and was afterwards appointed provost of the church of Winton, as the superior of the monastery was then called.

K. Egbert had so great a regard for him, that he chose him for his spiritual director; and his name, as "priest of K. Egbert," is found in a charter which Witlaf, king of the Mercians, granted to the abbey of Croyland in Lincolnshire. The king also entrusted his son Ethelwolf to his care. After a course of instruction, the young prince was ordained a sub-deacon, and made his profession as a monk at Winchester. But as he was the king's only son, and the royal line would otherwise have failed, he obtained a dispensation before his father's death, from Pope Leo III., to marry Osburga, a very holy woman. Their union was blessed with four sons, of whom the youngest was the great Alfred.

In 837, Ethelwolf succeeded his father in the throne of Wessex. Helmstan, bishop of Winchester, dying in 838, the king, with the unanimous consent of the clergy, prevailed on S. Swithun to accept the government of the see. He was consecrated by Cealnoth archbishop of Canterbury, to whom he

made a profession of his faith, and vowed canonical obedience. He devoted himself wholly to feed the flock of God which was committed to him ; and spent much of his time in spiritual exercises, and in the care of the poor. Great part of his nights was passed in watching and mortification. His exhortations were unceasing, to the faithful, to remain steadfast, and to the lapsed, to expiate their offence by penitence. In his works of charity his chief desire was to have no witnesses but God and his own conscience. For the grace of humility was the chief study of his life. He built and repaired many churches, and when he travelled to consecrate them he always walked barefoot ; and lest his humble appearance should attract admiration, he made his journeys by night. He was a great benefactor to his diocese, by building bridges, and other useful public works. In a word, he followed the path of peace and holiness, as a historian remarks, and thirsted after the fountain of life and eternal bliss. As the saintly prelates of the middle ages pass before us, can we forbear to cry out with S. Bernard, " Who will grant me before I die to behold the Church of God as it was in the ancient days ? "

In 855, a synod of the clergy and nobility met at Winchester, at which the tributary princes of Mercia and East Anglia were also present. K. Ethelwolf bestowed on the Church a tenth part of all the lands of his kingdom, " for the honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and all Saints." He confirmed this gift by a formal charter, which he afterwards solemnly laid on the altar of the blessed Apostles at Rome. The church lands were exempted

by the same deed from all secular services, exactions, and tributes. The king also confirmed the pension of Romescot or Peterpence, which had been first offered to the See of Rome in 726, by Ina, King of the West Saxons, and in 794 by Offa King of the Mercians, as a tribute of gratitude for the many signal favours which England had received from the successors of S. Peter. This grant was often renewed by the kings of England in later ages.

Ethelwolf then went to Rome, with his youngest son Alfred. Benedict III. was elected to the See during his stay; and among other costly gifts, the king presented him with a massive crown of pure gold. He also rebuilt the English school and hospital at Rome, which king Ina had founded. In 857 K. Ethelwolf died, soon after his return to England. The kingdom was divided between his two elder sons, Ethelbald and Ethelbert. But at the death of the former in 861, Ethelbert became sole king. The Danes made another irruption into England, and landing on the coast of Hampshire, plundered the city of Winchester, and the country around. They were repulsed by king Ethelbert, and retired to the island of Thanet.

S. Swithun was taken to bliss in the following year, on the 2nd of July. As he lay a dying, he enjoined his monks not to bury him in the church, but in a humble place, where the feet of passengers might tread, and the rain of heaven might fall upon him. But innumerable miracles made his lowly grave illustrious, and in 971, Ethelwold bishop of Winchester translated his remains into the cathedral church, as some say, by his own desire. The

ceremony was performed with great pomp, in the presence of many bishops and abbats, and a vast assembly of the clergy and religious. The day of his decease is observed in the Roman Martyrology on the 2d July, but the 15th of the same month has always been kept in England with greater devotion, in honour of this translation.

The body of the saint was enclosed in a rich shrine, and continued to be honoured by frequent miracles. The Church, which had originally borne the name of S. Peter, was placed under the united invocation of the holy Apostle and of S. Swithun. Walkelyn bishop of Winchester laid the foundation of the present cathedral, in 1079. In 1093 the relics of S. Swithun were removed into it, and laid in a costlier shrine. The nave was added by bishop William de Wykeham, chancellor of the kingdom in the reign of K. Edward III.; and in the end of the following century, Bishop Fox finished the choir. Amidst much that must grieve the heart of the devout Catholic, this church recalls, more than perhaps any other in England, the solemnities of better times. It is the burying place of many of the Saxon and Danish kings, and of a long line of holy bishops from S. Birinus in the 7th century, to Fox in the 16th. Attached to it was the Benedictine Priory of S. Peter and S. Swithun, called also Oldminster, for which some authors claim an origin as ancient as K. Lucius in the second century. But there is no authentic account of it earlier than the year 646, when S. Birinus placed monks in it. It was destroyed by the Danes in 867, but was soon after restored, and supplied with secular canons, who occupied it for nearly

a century, till it was finally made a house for Benedictine monks by S. Ethelwold in 963.

Winchester, the *Venta Belgarum* of the Romans, was the capital city of the West Saxons. Under the Christian kings of that race, and afterwards under the Danish sovereigns, it was enriched with many noble religious foundations. Besides the cathedral priory, there was a convent for Benedictine nuns, endowed by K. Alfred and his queen in the end of the ninth century, and dedicated in honour of our Ladye and S. Edburga. The same prince founded the monastery of Newminster, under the invocation of the Holy Trinity, S. Mary, and S. Peter, and his son Edward finished it in 901. It was originally built close to the priory; but so much inconvenience arose from this, that in 1110 it was removed by K. Henry I. to Hyde, without the walls of the city, on the north side.

After the conquest many other munificent gifts were bestowed on the church of Winchester. Thus in 1132, Henry de Blois, brother of K. Stephen, endowed the hospital of S. Cross, about a mile from the city. It was much enlarged by Cardinal Beaufort in the reign of Henry VI. William de Wykeham, the founder of New College, in Oxford, built another in Winchester, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, about the year 1387. Besides the principal houses, there were several smaller hospitals and colleges; and the orders of Augustinian, Black Grey, and White Friars, had each a convent in the city. There were, in all, sixteen houses of religious, from whose revenues a golden harvest was reaped when the age of sacrilege arrived. Only three of them survive, and these in an impoverished

condition. And now Winchester is a deserted place, and we may truly say of it, as of many ancient cities and towns in England, once so joyous, "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people; how is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; all her gates are desolate; her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness¹."

There is a popular notion, that if it rain on S. Swithun's day it will continue to do so for six weeks. None of the stories which are told in explanation of it are satisfactory; and they seem only to prove the total ignorance which prevails regarding it. And yet its being so generally believed, at least in this country, makes it probable that it depends on some physical yet unknown cause. Any story which would connect it with the life of S. Swithun can have no possible application to the 15th July of the present style.

And must each shrine of simple state,
In purer days devote,
To holy names yet consecrate,
Where holy voices float,
In dust beneath their feet be trod
Who make the people's voice a God?
Then be it;—of thy sons the while,
Be but the love more warm,
Not their's to court the people's smile,
Nor to the age conform.
So for our land their prayers may rise,
And God accept, when men despise.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 168.

¹ Lamentations, i. 1. 4.

JULY 20.

S. Margaret, Virgin and Martyr.

END OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

WE know little more of this holy virgin than her name, and that after witnessing a good confession before a pagan governor, she was honoured to die for her Lord. Her martyrdom took place at Antioch, in Pisidia, probably during the tenth general persecution in the end of the third century. It is said that she was the daughter of a heathen priest, and was converted by a Christian nurse; but of this there is no proof. Neither is there any better authority for the Acts which bear her name. They were written many ages after her decease, and therefore want the testimony of those who lived near the time to confirm them, which genuine Acts require.

It is remarkable, that from very early ages the Feast has been observed by the Catholic Church with singular honour. The Greeks commemorate her, the 17th of July, under the name of S. Marina, which occurs in their oldest Kalendars. She was invoked in litanies in England in the seventh century. The council of Oxford, in 1222, appointed her Feast to be kept as a holiday of the second rank, on which agricultural labour alone was permitted. And by the council of Worcester in 1240 the women of England were enjoined to abstain from servile work upon it. She is honoured with a special office in all Western Missals and Breviaries.

It is therefore impossible to doubt that, though we know little of this saint, the Church of Christ

with good reason deemed her worthy of great reverence. We often find that those saints, of whom least is recorded, are most universally honoured. S. George, the patron of England, is another remarkable instance of this.

S. Margaret is generally represented as bearing a cross, with which she is subduing a dragon; to signify that by the virtue of the cross she overcame the temptations of the devil.

“The love of integrity now invites us,” says S. Ambrose, “to speak of virginity. It is laudable, not because it is found in the martyrs, but because itself makes martyrs. Who then can by human understanding comprehend that which not even nature has included in her laws? or who can express in natural language what is above the use of nature. It has come down from heaven, to be imitated on earth. And not unworthily has she sought in heaven for her rule of life, who has found her Spouse in heaven. She, soaring above the clouds, and the sky, and the angels, and the stars, found the Word of God in the bosom of the Father, and has embraced Him with her whole heart. Who then can leave so infinite a good, having once found it? ‘Thy Name is ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.’ This interpretation is not mine, for it is written, that those who neither marry nor are given in marriage shall be as the angels of God in heaven. Let no one therefore wonder if they are compared with the angels, who are united to the Lord of angels.

“Who can deny that this life came down from heaven, and was not easily found upon earth, until God had descended into the members of our earthly

bodies? Then the Virgin conceived in her womb, and the Word was made flesh, that flesh might become God. But some one will say, even Elias is found to have preserved the purity of the virgin life. True: and therefore he was carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, and appeared with the Lord in glory, and will come as the precursor of His advent¹."

A great writer, after setting forth with saddest truth the lot of suffering which has fallen to woman since the disobedience of Eve, has these remarks: "From this reality of degradation and sorrow, all the ideas communicated by the Christian religion were calculated, indeed, to deliver woman; but it should be remembered, that it was the doctrine of virginity, as a French writer truly observes, which has more than all contributed to her emancipation. Before this doctrine was delivered or confirmed by Christianity, the woman could not treat upon equal terms with the man; but by making the virginal state a new condition, and that independent of all positive institutions, Christianity changed every thing; for, from the first moment that there was a free and voluntary condition of life for women, they had a personal importance; and this doctrine of virginity, which seem fatal to marriage, on the contrary constitutes its new force and its grandeur; for, from this moment, was what it had never been before, a free and reciprocal alliance. The tone and manners of society at present, sufficiently prove that the modern philosophic systems, by attaching ridicule to the virgin

¹ De Virginibus, lib. i.

state, have undermined the edifice which secures the social dignity and security of women²."

Open is the starry hall ;
Hear ye ! 'tis the Bridegroom's call !
Holy virgins, one and all,
 Ready stand,
For the heavenly festival
 Is at hand !

Come at last the nuptial day,
Tears for ever passed away ;
Fled the prison house, the clay,
 And the thrall ;
God for ever your sure stay,
 And your all !

In His presence is the store,
Purest joys for evermore,
And the fountain flowing o'er ;
 No more night,
Safe upon the happy shore
 Of the light.

Praise to Thee, Almighty One,
Triune Father, Spirit, Son,
By Whose boundless grace alone,
 Spirits know
Heaven's immortal union
 Even below.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 322.

² Mores Catholici, b. vi. 3.

JULY 22.

S. Mary Magdalene.

It is an ancient question in the Church, regarding which no decision has ever been pronounced, whether S. Mary Magdalene is the same person as Mary the sister of Lazarus, and as the "sinner" who anointed the feet of the Lord, of whom S. Luke writes¹. Each opinion claims the sanction of very great names. Thus S. Gregory the Great considers the three persons as one, and he is followed by Ven. Bede and S. Bernard. S. Augustin mentions the "sinner" as the sister of Lazarus, while Origen thinks that they are different persons, as do also S. Macarius, S. Chrysostom, and Theophylact. S. Ambrose places S. Mary Magdalene among the holy virgins, and expresses his doubt whether the "sinner" is the sister of Lazarus. S. Modestus, Patriarch of Jerusalem, writing in the beginning of the seventh age, held the same opinion as S. Ambrose, regarding the virginity of S. Mary Magdalene. S. Jerome cannot be quoted on either side, as he has expressed different opinions.

Upon the whole, the greater part of the early fathers distinguish the three persons from each other; and two only of the Greek doctors, and these not eminent, consider S. Mary Magdalene as either the "sinner" or Mary of Bethany. The Eastern Church has always held the three to be distinct.

The Western Church, on the other hand, seems to

¹ S. Luke vii. 37.

recognize them as one. Thus, in the collect of this day in the Roman Missal, S. Mary Magdalene is mentioned as the sister of Lazarus; and the holy Gospel contains the history of the washing of our Saviour's feet by the "woman who was a sinner." The Office of Sarum connects S. Mary Magdalene with the "sinner," in these words of the collect; "Grant to us, O most merciful Father, that as the blessed Mary Magdalene, by loving Thine Only-begotten Son above all things, obtained the pardon of her sins, so she may gain for us from Thy mercy eternal bliss." The lesson for the Epistle is that appointed for holy women not virgins, and is taken from Prov. xxxi. 10—31. The sequence, or hymn after the Epistle, commemorates the gracious meeting of the Saviour with S. Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre. The Gospel is the same as in the Roman Office. But the Churches of Paris, Orleans, and Vienne, and the order of Cluni, have carefully removed from their Offices for this Feast any allusion to either of the other women.

It would lead us too far from contemplative studies, were we to examine the arguments upon which these conflicting opinions rest. On reviewing the whole circumstances, it seems less unlikely that S. Mary Magdalene and the "sinner" are the same person; or that the woman who anointed the Lord in the house of the Pharisee is the same as the sister of Lazarus; than that Mary of Magdala is one with Mary of Bethany. On every side there are difficulties, which some may hope to be able to solve. But let no one imagine that the uncertainty in which this question is left by the Catholic Church, bears any

resemblance to the irreconcilable differences on vital points of faith, which agitate all bodies separated from her holy communion. "We must not consider," says Tillemont, "that the Eastern and Western Churches are opposed to each other, for then one of them would be in error; but we must remember that the Catholic Church takes no part in this difficulty, since religion is injured by neither view, but she leaves to her children free liberty to believe what good reasons and authority make them judge most probable¹." And whether we think of this history as belonging to one holy woman or to three, we may express our admiration of the devoted love which it commemorates, in the words of the abbat of Clairvaux, "Blessed is she who anointed the feet of Jesus; more blessed, she who anointed the Lord's head; but most blessed, who prepared the precious dew for His whole body."

The holy Evangelists relate that out of S. Mary Magdalene the Lord had cast seven devils. Some doctors interpret this literally, as if she had been possessed; while others, with S. Gregory the Great, understand it to signify her deliverance from the vices which filled her soul and body before her conversion. This interpretation of course supposes that the sinner and S. Mary are one person. After her deliverance from the power of the devil, in whatever form, she followed Christ in Galilee, with other pious women who ministered to Him of their substance. She herself belonged to Galilee, and derived

¹ See Tillemont, tome ii. pp. 28. 471. Also, *Harmony of our Lord's Passion*, p. 405.

her name of distinction from Magdala, a to Ephesus. The
shores of the Lake of Gennesaret. The end of the ninth
followed the Lord on His last journey to Constantinople, and
as the hour of His Passion drew near in honour of S.
stood not far from His Cross during the, the 20th March
of Good Friday. When the tomb of Joson. The Greeks
His holy body, the devoted Mary was, because she was
held how it was laid. And she return the Resurrection.
her companions to prepare spices and nk among the holy
embalm Him, and rested the Sabbath the Apostles; the
ing to the commandment. art by herself. Her

Early in the morning of the first of May, 1562, St. and West on the Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Oxford, in 1222, entered in England as a the Less, went to the sepulchre, before the sun, to perform their errand. Edward VI. this feast doubted, as they went, how they should in red letters, and a remove the great stone which lay before the door. They were appointed for it. But when they arrived, they found the stone was taken from the and on looking into the sepulchre, they were taken from the angel in shining garments sitting on the right hand under the in- them that the Lord was risen. This was the foreign innovators, to the disciples, filled with doubt. And on its restoration to joy, and related to them what they had heard of K. James, no special and S. John ran to the tomb, and an ancient one was thought had described; but, unable to find the question of the identity of that the Lord was indeed risen, he "sinner."

Hear the words of the host thee surround ;
 stood without, at the sepulch' while death e'en now
 wept, she stooped down into ^{her}ortal wound.
 two angels in white, sittin' o' vest thee shall claim,
 the other at the feet, where death's cold sleep ;
 lain. And they say unto thee, by thy name,
 do not to weep,

resemblance, the letter fulfilled in Mary Magdalene, points of fact a type of the Church. For when she rose from her holy grave alive she had loved with her whole heart," says Tertullian from her sight by death and burial, Churches are gathered in His couch. And so constrained them would be by great love to Him, that she could not leave the Catholic Church, rest, nor could His memory escape since religion. She sought Him during the night, leaves to her countless nights in which He rested in the good reasons and then did she find Him, for His probable. "Angels not yet come. She went early in the morning as belonging to spices, and still seeking anxiously, express our admiration. And Him whom she sought commemorates, immediately find; but first the angels vaunt, "Blessed are the watchmen of the Church. Jesus; more blessed the Lord, and hearing that He was near; but most blessed herself arrived at the sight of dew for His whole body and would not let Him go, when He had overcome death. She Magdalene the Lord brought Him into the house of her doctors interpret this assembly of disciples who had possessed; while orthodox, she preached that He was understood it to signify up to piety by her example." Vices which filled her records nothing more of the version. This interpretation. She is commonly believed the sinner and St. Mark, with the Blessed Virgin deliverance from the pain she survived the Mother of form, she followed Christ, remains were preserved in a pious woman who ministered. Gregory of Tours attests, stance. She herself believed historian in the eighth century the Greeks also mention

¹ See Tillemont, tome ii.
Lord's Passion, p. 405.

Anticorum. Lib. III. 3.

her as having died and been buried at Ephesus. The Emperor Leo the Philosopher in the end of the ninth century removed her relics to Constantinople, and placed them in a church dedicated in honour of S. Lazarus. In the Office of Aberdeen, the 20th March is kept in honour of her translation. The Greeks call her the Equal of the Apostles, because she was honoured to be the first witness of the Resurrection. She is said to bear the same rank among the holy women as S. Peter does among the Apostles; the Mother of the Lord being set apart by herself. Her Feast is kept throughout the East and West on the 22nd of July. The council of Oxford, in 1222, enjoined that it should be observed in England as a holyday of obligation.

In the first Prayer-book of K. Edward VI. this feast was inserted in the Kalendar in red letters, and a collect, Epistle, and Gospel were appointed for it. These, except the collect, were taken from the Sarum Office. But at the revision under the influence of Bucer, Martyr, and the foreign innovators, the Feast was suppressed. And on its restoration to the Kalendar in the reign of K. James, no special office was appointed, as the ancient one was thought to prejudge the doubtful question of the identity of S. Mary Magdalene with the "sinner."

Ah Mary ! little dost thou know
What good doth thee surround ;
Seeking the dead, while death e'en now
Receives his mortal wound.

He Whom thou lovest thee shall claim,
Aroused from death's cold sleep ;
Thee first He calls, thee by thy name,
And bids thee not to weep.

O might I touch Thy sacred feet,
Adoring cling to Thee !
Nay, raise thy thoughts to joys more meet,
For immortality.

The promises are fully wrought
First of Apostles thou,
Sent to Apostles, by thee taught
The tidings glad to know.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 222.

JULY 26.

S. Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

THE sacred history is silent regarding the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We know only that they were of the tribe of Judah, and that her father was descended from the royal line of David. Yet there has been a tradition in the Church from very early times that their names were Joachim and Anne. The name of S. Joachim may be traced to the fourth century. S. Jerom and S. Augustin mention it as received by a part of the Church in their day. The name of S. Anne cannot be found quite so early. The emperor Justinian I. built a church at Constantinople in her honour in 550, and translated her remains into it. Both saints were commemorated there on the 9th of September, the morrow of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin; and their death was celebrated on the 25th of July.

They were not heard of in the Western Church till the end of the eighth century, and they were not

generally honoured even in the age of S. Bernard. The name of S. Joachim is found, probably for the first time, in a martyrology dated 1491, on the 9th of September. Some of the relics of S. Anne were sent to Chartres in 1200, by Louis, Count of Blois.

The history of Joachim and S. Anne must ever remain unknown to us, as no record of it is preserved during the first ages, and the later accounts are entirely fabulous. But as we honour them, not so much for their own sakes, as because they were the parents of the Mother of God, we do not ask for any further information regarding them. And even if their very names were imaginary, we might still commemorate their persons with true devotion. But it seems an unreasonable suspicion of the early Church to doubt that it had the best authority for enrolling these names in the catalogue of saints. None can doubt the existence of the persons, unless the Blessed Virgin herself is a Catholic fiction.

We may not venture without reverence to withdraw the veil, even in thought, which conceals the early life of the blessed Mary. It is a theme which has inspired the great Catholic painters with the loveliest conceptions. Behold the mother tending the gentle child, in whose infant countenance humility is so mysteriously blended with thought deeper than a child's. As yet the scenes of the Annunciation, and the Nativity, and all that followed, lie deeply hidden in futurity. God is training His chosen to fulfil her part. How high and solemn, and how encompassed with suffering! Earthly language fails to express the thoughts which even our cold hearts conceive, much less can it give utterance to the

love and admiration which the sight might worthily inspire. But such poor tribute as we can offer will not be rejected, if it be no more than an humble confession that the best is infinitely unworthy.

S. Anne is generally represented with a book, to signify that she had the care of teaching pious lessons to her blessed child.

Ave Maria ! Blessed Maid !
Lily of Eden's garden shade,
Who can express the love
That nurtured thee so pure and sweet,
Making thy heart a shelter meet
For Jesus' holy Dove !

Christian Year, p. 317.

AUGUST.

AUGUST 1.**Lammas Day.**

THE name of this holyday is a corruption of Loaf-mass,—a Feast of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the corn, which was annually observed in England in the beginning of August. Bread made of the new wheat was offered at the mass of this day, and was solemnly blessed; and hence, in many parts of England, tenants were bound to bring in wheat of that year to their lords, on or before the 1st of August. The day was kept with great festivity.

Some antiquarians derive the name of Lammas from Lambmass; because it was a condition on which the lands of the cathedral church of York were let, that the tenants should offer a lamb yearly at the mass of this day. But this seems to have been only a local custom.

The blessing of new fruits was performed annually in the Eastern and Western Churches on the 1st, and sometimes on the 6th of August. It is mentioned on the latter day in the Sacramentary of S. Gregory. The benediction took place in the canon of the Mass,

after the words *largitor admitte*, in the prayer *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*. "At this time," says Bona, "if there were any new fruits, or any other things for man's use, to be blessed, they were formally to be laid on the altar, and here blessed by the priest; and the blessing being ended with the accustomed clause, *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*, they added the prayer following, *Per Quem hæc omnia*, "Through Whom Thou, O Lord, dost ever create, sancti ✠ fy, vivi ✠ fy, ble ✠ ss, and bestow on us all these good things. Through Hi ✠ m, and with Hi ✠ m, and in Hi ✠ m, is to Thee, God the Fath ✠ er Almighty, in the unity of the Holy ✠ Spirit, all honour and glory." *Hæc omnia*, as Dacherius remarks in the preface to the fourth volume of the *Spicilegium*, does not refer to the oblations alone, but to the things which have been blessed, which were made by God, and which we beseech Him by His benediction to sanctify to our use.

"This was the piety of our ancestors, that all sacred and ecclesiastical functions, administrations of sacraments, and benedictions, were always performed during the solemnity of the Mass. For of all things the Eucharist is the perfection and consummation, from which they receive their energy and sanctity. Whether a treaty was to be ratified, or a truce to be concluded, whether an oblation was to be made to God, or heretics were to be excommunicated, or the birthdays of the saints or other festivals were to be proclaimed, or fasts and litanies; or penitents were to be reconciled; or hands to be laid on the initiated; whether bishops were to be consecrated, or

kings to be anointed, or chrism hallowed, these and all such things used to be done under the protection of the Eucharist; and without the sacrifice they thought that nothing was properly performed¹."

Lammas day was also called the Gule of August. Some say that this is the same word as Yule, a name signifying a festival or holyday, and commonly given to Christmas. Others interpret it to mean a cycle or anniversary; others a beginning. But none of these derivations explain why the name was given to this day rather than to any other festival or anniversary, or to the first day of any other month. Its true etymology seems to have been derived from *gula*, the throat; and commemorates the miraculous cure of a disease in the throat with which the daughter of Quirinus, a Roman tribune, was afflicted, during the pontificate of S. Alexander, the seventh in succession from the blessed Peter. After the glorious martyrdom of the first Bishop of Rome, the faithful disciples of the Cross kept the chains with which he had been bound, as precious relics of his passion. And S. Alexander, who filled the see early in the second century, hearing of this young woman's sufferings, directed her to visit the Church where these chains were preserved, and to kiss them. She did so in faith, and was cured. And her whole family was immediately converted and baptized.

For fourteen centuries the Church has observed the 1st of August as a festival in commemoration of the miraculous deliverance of S. Peter from prison². In the fifth age a church of S. Peter *ad vincula* was

¹ Rerum Liturg. lib. ii. c. 14.

² Acts xii.

dedicated in Rome on this day; and hence the festival was kept upon it, though the event happened shortly before Easter. His chains were kept there, and were held in great veneration. This church now gives title to a Cardinal. It is not unreasonable to suppose that in some parts of the Church at least this miracle would be related as often as the feast returned, and so in time *Kalendæ Augusti* was changed to *Gula Augusti*.

“ I make no question,” says Hearne, the learned antiquary, “ but this famous accident was formerly, before the pulling down and making havock of the religious houses, (a most dismal thing,) much talked of, and mentioned too, annually, in the sermons and homilies on the feast of S. Peter’s chains among us in England, though it be now quite forgotten. Nay they did not mention such things only in their sermons and homilies, but oftentimes in their thanksgiving prayers. It were to be wished that this custom had not been broke off. People would by that means have been better able to tell who were the founders of their churches, and to [the honour of] what saints they were dedicated¹.” This explanation of the word Yule is confirmed by Cowel, in his Law Dictionary.

No brazen fetters have the captive bound,
Who glories in the name invincible ;
Nor the dread sound
Of sentry watching by the bolted cell ;
He in his chains hath truer freedom found.
’Mid purer heavens his unchained spirit doth stray.

¹ Notes on Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester, vol. ii. p. 681.

The ponderous iron is by love made light,

And the clear ray

Breaks in the prisonhouse of gloomy night

From the bright courts of everduring day.

Blest chains, that prove no guilty criminal,

But one trained in Christ's school, serenely bent

To suffer all,—

More precious they than golden ornament,

And glittering beads worn in the regal hall.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 225.

AUGUST 6.

Transfiguration.

THE Transfiguration of the Lord, which is the theme of our contemplation on this day, has been called by ancient doctors the Sacrament of the Resurrection. It took place probably on Mount Tabor in Galilee, and in the spring of the year of the Incarnation 32, that is, in the third year of our Lord's public ministry. The evangelists S. Matthew, S. Mark, and S. Luke have each recorded its marvellous circumstances. The English Church used anciently to commemorate it at the Eucharistic Office in the words of the holy Gospel according to S. Matthew, as the Latin Church does at this day. While we read them, be ours the prayer that "the Lord may be in our hearts and on our lips, that we may worthily pronounce the holy Gospel of God."

"And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart; and was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His

Y

raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias, talking with Him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here ; if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead¹."

The narrative of S. Mark is nearly in the same words. S. Luke adds that the Lord retired with His three chosen Apostles "to pray ;" and that "as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening." He also relates that Moses and Elias "appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

That we may learn a deeper lesson from this mystery, let us observe the events which went immediately before it. The three Evangelists relate them in very similar words. S. Peter had made the glorious confession, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, on which the Lord declared that

¹ S. Matt. xvii. 1—9.

His Church should be built as on a sure rock. That blessed Apostle had received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, with power to bind and loose on earth, and with the promise that his sentence should be confirmed in heaven. The Lord had begun to declare more particularly to His disciples the circumstances of His bitter Passion, and had taught them the painful lesson of His Cross, which the faithful must take up daily and follow Him. He had again urged upon them the infinite value of the world to come, and had foretold the advent of the Son of Man in glory, to reward every one according to his works. He had proclaimed that "whosoever shall be ashamed of Him and of His words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in the Father's, and of the holy angels." And, further, He had declared that there were some standing near who should not taste of death, till they should see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

"And after six days," or, as S. Luke says, "about an eight days after," "Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves, and He was transfigured before them¹." "After the confirmation of the Cross," says S. Jerom, "the glory of the Resurrection is shown: that they might not fear the reproach of the Cross, who had seen with their eyes the glory of the future Resurrection."

The ancient Fathers of the Church have drawn many lessons of wisdom from each minute particular in the history of the Transfiguration. Thus Ven.

¹ S. Mark ix. 2.

Bede remarks that "the Lord went into a mountain to pray and to be transfigured, to show them who expect the fruit of the Resurrection, and who desire to see the King in His beauty, that they must dwell above in mind, and must be occupied in continual prayer." So also S. Bernard, "Wherefore did He ascend to be transfigured, but to teach us to ascend in thought to the future glory which shall be revealed in us. Ascend with heart elate, and God will exalt you. For here is the mountain in which Christ is transfigured. Ascend, and ye shall know how the Lord hath glorified His Holy One. Lighten your hearts, I beseech you, from the weight of earthly thoughts, that ye may see the Lord transfigured¹."

Thus too, regarding the choice of the Apostles, S. Damasus, the renowned Bishop of Rome, in the 4th century, observes that S. Peter had received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and was to be the future chief governor of the Church; S. James was the first of the Apostolic company to die for Christ; and S. John was the most pure organ of Divine doctrine, to whom was afterwards committed the care of the Blessed Mother of God. "He took with Him the three heads of the Apostles," says Theophylact; "Peter, as confessing and loving Him; John, as beloved by Him; and James, as the high-voiced teacher of Divine learning."

Of the sight which their eyes beheld on the mountain of Transfiguration none may venture to speak more than the Holy Spirit has revealed. All ancient writers agree in carefully maintaining that no change

¹ Serm. IV. de Ascens. Domini.

of substance passed upon our Divine Lord ; but that such as He shall appear at the Judgment, He then showed Himself to the Apostles. He laid aside nothing of His true and natural body, but only withdrew the veil which concealed its supernal glory.

Many mystical reasons are given by early writers for the appearance of Moses and Elias. As, for instance, that in the Gospel, the Law and the Prophets have their fulfilment ; or that it signified the power which the Lord has over the quick and dead ; or represented the saints whom, at His second Advent, He shall find in the flesh, as well as those whom He shall revive from the sleep of death. For Elias had not yet tasted death. There is a very ancient tradition in the Church, that the two witnesses whom S. John saw in the Apocalypse¹ are Enoch and Elias, who shall once again appear on earth, and preach the Gospel to the Jews, and at last be put to death by Antichrist.

The heavenly vision so ravished the heart of S. Peter, that he would have remained for ever in its enjoyment. But better things are in store for all the faithful servants of the Lord. When the conflict and the trial are past, there shall be the eternal vision of the blessed Godhead, in the society, not of Moses and Elias only, but of the whole company of the redeemed, and of the angelic choirs. "As for me," says the prophet, "I shall behold Thy presence

¹ xi. 3—7. See the testimony of some of the greatest of the early doctors of the Church on this subject, quoted in a note on S. Matt. ii. 20, in the Oxford translation of the *Catena Aurea*.

in righteousness ; and when I awake up after Thy likeness I shall be satisfied with it."

But while he spake, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and, as S. Luke relates, "they feared, as they entered into the cloud." And the voice of the Father was a second time heard on earth, proclaiming, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." "This may well be termed the mystery of the second Regeneration," says an ancient author, "which shall take place in the Resurrection, when the flesh shall be revived, as baptism is the mystery of the first, in which the soul is reanimated. In the Baptism of Christ also, the operation of the whole Trinity was shown. For there was the Incarnate Son, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, and the Father was declared to be present in the voice. And so in the Transfiguration, which is the Sacrament of the second Regeneration, the whole Trinity appeared. The Father, in the voice ; the Son, in humanity ; and the Holy Ghost in the cloud. Is it asked why the Holy Spirit appeared there in the dove, here in the cloud?—Thus He is wont by His modes of appearance to declare His gifts. For in baptism He gives innocency, which is figured by the bird of simplicity. But in the Resurrection He will give clarity and refreshment ; and therefore in the cloud is signified refreshment, and in its brightness, the clarity of the rising bodies¹."

But the weak bodies of men cannot endure so near an approach to the heavenly world. The extremity of bliss is as insupportable as the greatest

¹ Catena Aurea in S. Matt. xvii.

fear. Blessed are they who, like the Apostles on the lake of Gennesaret and on the mountain of Tabor, in sorrow and in joy, ever hear the benign voice of Jesus, saying, "Be not afraid." Many wonderful histories are related of ancient saints, in whom was partly fulfilled, even in this world, the beatitude of the pure in heart. They saw God in clearer vision than is ordinarily granted to man; and on their bodies marvellous effects were visible. "It was during such intervals," says the author of the *Mores Catholici*, "that the transcendant prodigies with which all holy history rings were effected. Then did they enjoy those gifts which so visibly bespeak the joys of a world unlike ours,—the gift of tears, streaming delicious tears,—tears that were a wonder, and rightly denominated a gift from heaven, such a bliss spread through the soul as soon as they flowed forth, like the waters of a river, sweeping away black sorrow, and disquietude, and trembling doubts; then came there the gift of jubilation ineffable, inconceivable, producing insensibility to all material objects around,—the gift of utterance too of words that surpass human intelligence, of tones unearthly, as if all that the soul had ever learned here below were already blotted out and forgotten; and so in truth they were, at least while that high triumph lasted, for in that heavenly banqueting, 'the soul,' as Dante saith, 'outgrows herself, and in the transport lost, held now remembrance none of what she was¹.'" But I dare not venture further upon this mystic ground, whose confines few may pass unharmed.

S. Peter, in his second Catholic epistle, recalls

¹ Book viii. 16.

the scene of the Transfiguration to the memory of the faithful, in words which are sung in the Epistle of this day in the Latin Church. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts¹."

In the words of the collect in the Office of Sarum, let us sum up our contemplations of this ineffable mystery: "O God, Who didst on this day reveal from heaven to the fathers of either Testament Thine only-begotten Son wonderfully transfigured; grant to us, we beseech Thee, to arrive at the eternal contemplation of His glory, with Whom Thou hast testified that Thou art ever well pleased. Through the same."

This festival was observed in Rome in the middle of the fifth century, as we learn from a homily of S. Leo delivered upon it. Pope Calixtus III. made it more universal and solemn by a bull dated in 1457. It is kept on this day, not because the Transfiguration took place upon it, for it happened earlier in the year, "but because," as Durandus remarks, "at this time it was first published by the Apostles who

¹ 2 S. Pet. i. 16—19.

had been with Christ on the mount. For the Lord had commanded them to tell no man till He had risen from the dead¹."

The same author takes notice of a custom which prevails in some places of mixing the chalice with wine of new grapes, at the adorable Sacrifice on this day. And the reason which he gives for it is this ; " On the day of the last supper, Jesus said to His disciples, ' Verily I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new in the kingdom of My Father.' Since then the Transfiguration belongs to that glorious renewal which Christ had after His resurrection, and which the faithful shall have after their resurrection ; therefore on this feast the Blood of Christ is made of new wine, and new grapes are blessed upon it." In the Office of Sarum is this prayer of benediction of new grapes on this day : " Bless, O Lord, these fruits of the new grape, which Thou, O Lord, hast deigned to bring to maturity by the dew of heaven, the fall of rain, and the serenity of the seasons, and which Thou hast given us to use with thanksgiving. In the name of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ. *Per Quem.*"

Good Jesu ! while time's scroll I still unfold,
Do Thou to me Thy love make manifest,
That I, 'mid clouds that wrap me, may behold
Thine everlasting glory, and find rest.

He whom Thy love makes glad as with new wine,
He knows that knowledge which is from above ;
Full blest is he ; that fulness is Divine ;
And there is nothing else that he can love.

¹ Rationale Div. Offic. lib. vii. c. 22.

Thou art the Fount of pity ; as it flows,
All drink of Thine abundance infinite :
Thou art the only Sun Thy country knows ;
Scatter the clouds, and show us Thy true light.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 232.

AUGUST 7.

Holy Name of Jesus.

HITHERTO our contemplations have been such as the imperfect condition of the Church militant can entertain in the country of its exile. But on this day we are invited to raise our thoughts from past scenes on earth to the present glory of our Divine Lord in heaven. There the Church in triumph beholds the face of Jesus unveiled, and is inebriated with the pure stream which issues from that Fount of joy. And we from afar off may this day adore Him "Whom not having seen we love;" in patience waiting and longing for the day when we too "shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." "For the Festival of His holy Name," says a pious writer, "seems in some measure to comprise every mystery, every mercy, every title of honour, every benefit, every grace, every effort of Divine love, which we adore in the whole process of His Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Coming as sovereign Judge of the living and dead. This sacred Name of Jesus presents to our mind the majesty and glory of His divinity, the most endearing charms of His humanity, under the

character of the Divine Saviour and eternal Spouse of our souls. The adorable Name of Jesus was given by the Father to His only co-eternal Son, to be the title of His Supreme Majesty, power, and dominion, and of His glorious victory over sin and hell, and to express in Him the unexhausted source of all grace, blessings, and comfort, which He is to us."

Before the birth of our Lord, the holy Name was declared by the message of an angel; once to His Blessed Mother at the Annunciation, and at another time in a dream to S. Joseph. The holy Gospel for the day in the Office of Sarum, records, in the words of S. Matthew, the appearance of the angel to S. Joseph. "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born Son, and he called His Name Jesus¹."

The name of Jesus was given to the holy Child at His Circumcision, when He shed the first drops of

¹ S. Matt. i. 20, to the end.

His precious blood in obedience to the law. And as He began to fulfil His office in humility and suffering, so He consummated it in the shame and agony of the cross. And the Name which He received on the eighth day after His birth was inscribed upon the instrument of His death. But how full of hidden meaning is that writing of Pilate—Jesus, the King! It comprehends the history of His life and of His glory. “For He went not up to joy but first He suffered pain; He entered not into His glory before He was crucified.” “He made Himself of no reputation,” says S. Paul, “and took upon Him the form of a slave, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father¹.”

“O my Jesu!” cries the holy Ignatius, “even so despised and rejected of men, so filled with reproaches and acquainted with infirmity, I adore Thee with the highest worship, my Lord, and my God, my King, and my Guide! So far is it from me to esteem little of Thee in this guise, that the more I perceive Thy divinity concealed in Thee, so much the more do I love Thy humanity: the viler Thou art become for me, so much the more precious

¹ Philippians ii. 7—11.

art Thou to me. O who can sufficiently admire, who can embrace with a love worthy of it, Thy sublime goodness, which made Thee willing to become nothing, that Thou mightest raise me up ; to take upon Thee the form of a slave, that Thou mightest make me a son of God ; to be the reproach of men, that I might be made a partaker of Thine eternal glory ! O whither has Thy love towards me impelled Thee¹ !”

When the Lord had returned from the grave, and before His admirable ascension to the right hand of His Father, He promised to His Apostles that in His Name they should cast out devils, and speak with new tongues, and lay hands on the sick, and they should recover². The first miracle which is recorded in holy Scripture, after the day of Pentecost, was accomplished in this all-powerful Name. S. Peter said to the lame man at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, “ Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee ; in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk³.” And in the words which the Sarum Office uses at the Epistle of this day, he further declares the majesty of this blessed Name. “ Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Whom ye crucified, Whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in

¹ Exercit. Spir. Dies vii.

² S. Mark xvi. 17.

³ Acts iii. 6.

any other; for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved¹."

At another time, we learn that when the Apostles and the whole company of the faithful were assembled, and were praying that God would stretch forth His hand to heal, and that many signs and wonders might be done by the name of His holy Child Jesus, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost². "This miraculous Name," says bishop Taylor, "is above all the powers of magical enchantment, the nightly rites of sorcerers, the secrets of Memphis, the drugs of Thessaly, the silent and mysterious murmurs of the wise Chaldees, and the spells of Zoroastres. This is the Name, at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the Divinity, and quitting their possession and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this Name, God opens the windows of heaven, and rains down benediction: at the mention of this Name the blessed Apostles, and Hermione, the daughter of S. Philip, and Philotheus, the son of Theophila, and S. Hilarion, and S. Paul the Eremite, and innumerable other lights, who followed hard after the Sun of Righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles. This is the Name which we should engrave in our hearts and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon,

¹ Acts iv. 10—12.

² Acts iv. 30.

and place our hopes in, and love with the overflowings of charity, and joy, and adoration¹."

And as this holy Name was endowed with miraculous power, so it was regarded by the early followers of the Lord, and by His disciples in all ages, with the deepest love and adoration. Thus S. Paul directs the Ephesians to "give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ²." And thus also he exhorts the Colossians: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him³." Indeed, so unceasing is the mention of the Name of Jesus in the writings of S. Paul, that, as S. Jerom remarks, he seems to delight in repeating it even more frequently than appears necessary to colder hearts⁴. "This Name of my Saviour," says S. Augustine of himself before his baptism, "had my tender heart even with my mother's milk devoutly drunk in, and deeply treasured; and whatsoever was without that Name, though never so learned, polished, or true, took not entire hold of me⁵."

"Thy Name is as ointment poured forth," cries S. Bernard, in the language of the Song of Songs; "how dear, yet how little esteemed! Little esteemed, yet healthgiving. If it were not esteemed vile, it would not have been poured out for me. If it were not healthgiving, it would not enrich me. And

¹ Life of Christ, part i. sect. 5.

² Chap. v. 20.

³ Chap. iii. 17.

⁴ See 1 Cor. i.; where the holy Name occurs nine times in the first ten verses.

⁵ Conf. lib. iii. c. 4.

what wonder if the Name of the Spouse is poured forth, when He is Himself poured forth. For He emptied Himself, and took the form of a slave. Again, He says, I am poured out like water¹."

Full of holiest ardour is the prayer for this day in the Sarum Office: "O God, Who hast made the most glorious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thine only begotten Son, to be loved by all Thy faithful ones with the highest affection of sweetness, and to evil spirits, tremendous and terrible: mercifully grant that all those who devoutly venerate the Name of Jesus on earth, may receive the sweetness of holy consolation at this present, and in the world to come may obtain the joy of exultation and of never-ending jubilee. Through the same."

Words fail me to describe the marvellous beauty of the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, so dear to the Catholic heart. In it He is invoked by every term of grace and mercy by which He has made Himself known, and after each follows the plaintive *Miserere*. Witness too the hymn of S. Bernard, "*Jesu dulcis memoria*," which, in its sweet simplicity, and seraphic love, no pen of uninspired man has ever equalled. Truly the men of that middle time were not wanting in devotion to their Lord Jesus, of "whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

It is an ancient law and custom in the Church, that the faithful should bow the head whenever they pronounce this adorable Name, or hear it uttered by others. The council of Lyons, in the 13th century,

¹ Serm. super Cant. 15.

formally confirmed the rule of antiquity; and special privileges were granted to those who obeyed it by the councils of Avignon and Beziers in the following age. The xviiith Canon of the Anglican Church enjoins this outward act of reverence in these words: "Likewise, when in time of divine service the Lord Jesus shall be mentioned, due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present, as it hath been accustomed; testifying by these outward ceremonies and gestures their inward humility, Christian resolution, and due acknowledgment that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone all the mercies, graces, and promises of God to mankind for this life and the life to come, are fully and wholly comprised."

In many lesser ways did the Christians of early times show their adoration of the Name of Jesus. Thus, out of the initial letters of the words Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ—Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour—they composed the word ἸΧΘΥΣ, which in Greek signifies a fish, and they constantly used the figure of a fish as an emblem of the Christian birth in the waters of holy baptism, as well as a memorial of their Lord. It is found inscribed on many of the tombs of the early saints and martyrs, and of the faithful generally, along with the palm branch, the dove, and the holy monogram. The ancient form of the fish is preserved in many of the seals and architectural ornaments of the middle ages. Some have even traced the use of the pointed arch to the same emblem.

Another combination of the letters of our Saviour's


Z

Name is also very ancient, and is still common at this day. The sacred vessels and ornaments of the Church are frequently marked with the characters IHS. These are the first three letters of the Greek Name 'ΙΗΣΟΥΣ—Jesus. The monogram XP¹ is composed of the first two letters of ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΣ—Christus. These things may seem trifling, but as evidence of the unceasing love of the ancient Church, they are full of meaning.

A special office on the 14th of January, in honour of the Holy Name, was granted by Clement VII. to the Franciscan order in 1530. It was extended to the Carthusians in 1643, and afterwards to Spain, on the second Sunday after Epiphany; and was finally promulgated to the Latin Church by Innocent XIII. in 1721, and on the latter day. The old English Church observed the 7th of August in its honour, long before the change of religion.

I bow at Jesus' Name, for 'tis the sign
Of awful mercy towards a guilty line.—
Of shameful ancestry, in birth defiled,
And upwards from 'a child
Full of unlovely thoughts and rebel aims,
As hastening judgment flames,
How can I lightly view my means of life ?—
The Just assailing sin, and death-stained in the strife !

And so, albeit His woe is our release,
Thought of that woe aye dims our earthly peace ;
The Life is hidden in a Fount of blood !—
And this is tidings good
But in the angels' reckoning, and to those
Who angel-wise have chose

¹ Sometimes written .

And kept, like Paul, a virgin course, content
 To go where Jesus went ;
 But for the many, laden with the spot
 And earthly taint of sin, 'tis written, "Touch me not."

Lyra Apostolica, p. 13.

AUGUST 10.

S. Laurence, Deacon and Martyr.

258.

WE know nothing of the early life of S. Laurence. It has been said, but without good reason, that he was a native of Spain. An ancient author remarks that he was as poor in the goods of this world, as he was rich in those of heaven. He was ordained deacon by S. Sixtus II. Bishop of Rome, the twenty-fifth in descent from the blessed Peter. This holy prelate was elected to the papal chair in 257, and obtained the honour of martyrdom in the following year. He appointed S. Laurence to the office of Archdeacon of the city of Rome.

In 258 the fury of the eighth general persecution, under the emperor Valerian, had reached its height. It fell most severely on the Christian bishops, who stood in the foremost rank of the noble army of Confessors. Orders were issued that none of them should be spared, and the Bishop of Rome was seized, and condemned, and led forth to death. S. Laurence, then in the flower of his youth, followed him weeping; not because he lamented his martyrdom, but because his Bishop had left him behind, and he should not have the honour of sharing his

crown. "Whither art thou going, my father, without thy son?" he cried, as S. Ambrose relates; "Whither, O holy priest, dost thou hasten without thy deacon? Wast thou ever wont to offer the Sacrifice without thy minister? Dost thou refuse me a share in thy bloody death, when thou hast admitted me to consecrate the Blood of the Lord? Abraham offered his son; Peter sent Stephen before him. O father, let thy strength be shown in thy son; offer him whom thou hast trained up!"

The Bishop comforted him, saying, "I do not leave thee behind, my son; but a nobler struggle is in store for thee. We, as old men, finish our course by a lighter trial; but, in thy youth, a more glorious triumph awaits thee. Thou shalt soon come after me. Cease to weep. After three days thou shalt follow me. It is fitting that between the priest and the deacon this number should intervene. Why dost thou desire a share in my passion? I leave it to thee as an inheritance. Why wish my presence? Let the disciple go before his master." He then went on to death, and consummated his sacrifice on the 6th of August. He is honoured with a commemoration on that day in the Latin Church.

S. Laurence was comforted by the assurance of his master that he should so soon follow him, and immediately assembled all the poor Christians, and divided among them the treasures of the Church, which had been entrusted to his care as archdeacon. Even in their state of poverty and suffering, the Christians possessed rich chalices and vessels, and golden candlesticks for the service of the altar. These S. Laurence sold, and gave their value to the

poor, lest they should fall into the hands of the pagans. The tyrant, hearing of this largess, imagined that the Christians were possessed of hidden wealth. He summoned the archdeacon to his presence, and examined him regarding the riches of the Church, and commanded him under severe penalties to deliver them up. The saint acknowledged that they were very great, and promised on a given day to bring them forth. He was threatened with death if he should fail to fulfil his promise, and was then dismissed.

Without delay he gathered together all the poor Christians in Rome, in number about fifteen hundred, with the holy virgins and widows; and having assembled them at the doors of the church, he invited the emperor to come and see the treasures which he had boasted of. The tyrant was furious at the disappointment, but S. Laurence cried out, "These are the riches of the Church. For what treasures has Christ more precious than these in whom He says that Himself is? As it is written, I was hungry and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; and again, Forasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me. What greater riches has Jesus than those in whom He loves to be seen? The earthly gold which you desire is the root of all evil and misery; but these are the children of light, which is the true wealth. For no chance can destroy it, nor thief take it away. And lest you should think Christ poor, behold these gems, the consecrated virgins and holy widows. These are the precious ornaments of the Church; arrayed in these,

she is lovely in the eyes of Christ her Spouse. Take them then, and adorn your city."

S. Laurence was instantly seized, and condemned to the torture, unless he would renounce Christ. All the efforts of his tormentors were unavailing, and he was sentenced to die. An iron frame shaped like a gridiron was prepared, and heated red hot by live coals underneath, and upon this the martyr was laid, and bound with chains. Throughout the lingering agony he was wonderfully refreshed by heavenly solaces, and his countenance showed no sign of suffering. It was calm and unruffled to the last. The newly baptized alone beheld him encircled with an unearthly light, and they perceived a most fragrant perfume ascending from his body. His constancy won the hearts of several of the beholders to the true Faith. So tranquil was he that, as Prudentius, who has celebrated his praises, relates, when one side was consumed, he bade the executioners to turn him on the other, and when the fire had done its work upon that too, he said to them, "Now it is ready, you may eat." Thus, as it had been foretold, he departed by a more glorious way than his master, to the embraces of his God.

His martyrdom took place on the 10th of August, without the city. A few devoted Christians carried away his body, and buried it on the road to Tivoli, where a church was afterwards built in his honour. Before the beginning of the fifth century there were two churches in Rome which bore his name. Pope Pelagius, in 580, rebuilt the church where his remains were preserved, and covered his tomb with plates of

silver. It is at this day one of the seven principal stations in Rome.

His tomb soon became renowned for innumerable miracles. "Who that has prayed at the tomb of S. Laurence," says S. Augustin, "has failed to obtain what he asked?" Hence his name became famous throughout Christendom, and his feast has been celebrated with great solemnity ever since the fifth age. Both the Western and Eastern Churches observe it on the 10th of August. He is mentioned in the oldest Roman Kalendar, of date 354, and in all the martyrologies.

In the Sacramentary of S. Gregory, there is a Mass appointed for the vigil of his feast, another, called the First Mass, at night, and a third on his festival or natal day. The first and the last of these have special Prefaces. That in the Mass of his feast is in these words; "It is very worthy and just, right and salutary, that we should always and everywhere give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God. And chiefly on the day of this solemnity, on which the blessed Laurence was offered up, a holy, living sacrifice, well pleasing to Thee; who inflamed by the fire of Thy love, endured with constancy the fire of his passion, and through most cruel torments arrived at the society of the citizens above. Through Christ our Lord."

In the present Roman Office, as in the ancient one of Sarum, he is honoured with a vigil, a festival, and an octave. His name has been included in the Canon of the Mass, since the days of S. Gregory. In the early part of the sixth century, Justinian, before his advancement to the imperial throne, sent messengers

to Pope Hormisdas to request a relic of S. Laurence. He refused to send any part of the martyr's body, but gave him a small filing of the gridiron on which he had suffered, and which was preserved with great care. A similar gift S. Gregory the Great sent to a lord of France, who had begged it of him.

The martyrdom of S. Laurence is said to have been as glorious to the Roman Church, as that of S. Stephen was to the Church of Jerusalem, in earlier days. And the conversion of the city of Rome from paganism to Christianity which shortly followed it, is universally attributed to his prayers. His name has been celebrated by some of the most eminent of the ancient fathers. S. Ambrose, S. Augustin, S. Peter Chrysologus, S. Leo, and S. Maximus of Turin, have mentioned him in their writings, with the highest honour. Prudentius in his great poem *Of the Crowns* has related many particulars of his passion. It is from these early writers chiefly that we know the history of his life and death, for his Acts are wholly without credit.

The noblest monument of devotion to S. Laurence is the royal palace of the Escorial, about fifteen miles from Madrid. It was begun in 1557, by Philip II. of Spain, out of gratitude for a victory which he had gained, on the feast of S. Laurence, at S. Quentin in Picardy, over the French army; and it is named from a small village near it. It is built in the form of a gridiron, of which the royal apartments form the handle; in the centre is the church, and on either side are the palace and the convent and library arranged in many courts, arcades, and cloisters, and inclosing beautiful gardens within them.

It occupied twenty-two years in building. Underneath the church is the burying-place of the kings of Spain, in which is inscribed the legend, *Ego dormio, et cor meum vigilat*. "I sleep, but my heart waketh¹."

S. Laurence is generally represented in the vestments of a deacon, bearing the gridiron.

When Persecution's torrent blaze
Wraps the unshrinking martyr's head ;
When fade all earthly flowers and bays,
When summer friends are gone and fled,
Is he alone in that dark hour
Who owns the Lord of love and power ?

Or waves there not around his brow
A wand no human arm may wield,
Fraught with a spell no angels know,
His steps to guide, his soul to shield ?
Thou, Saviour, art his charmed bower,
His magic ring, his rock, his tower.

Christian Year, p. 266.

AUGUST 28.

S. Augustin, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.

430.

S. AUGUSTIN was born at Tagaste, an episcopal city of Numidia in Africa, in the year 354. His parents were of humble rank. His father Patricius was a

¹ Cant. v. 2. See *Annales d'Espagne*, par Alvarez Calmenar, tome ii. p. 136.

pagan, but was finally converted to the Christian Faith by the gentle example and the prayers of Monica, the holy mother of S. Augustin. They bestowed great care on the education of their son ; and he soon gave promise of future excellence in human learning. In his boyhood he was seized with a dangerous sickness, and earnestly desired baptism, having been already made a catechumen by the sign of the cross and salt, which was called the Sacrament of catechumens. His mother also longed for his regeneration in the waters of baptism. But for some reason it was put off ; and as he speedily recovered, his desire for it was soon forgotten.

He was sent to Madaura, a town not far from Tagaste, to study grammar and rhetoric. When he was fifteen years of age, he returned home, and remained there for a year till his father had saved enough of money to send him to finish his education at Carthage. In this interval of idleness, he fell into dissolute habits, notwithstanding the tears of his mother ; his father rather encouraging him in his vicious inclinations.

On his arrival in Carthage, he abandoned himself more entirely to unlawful pleasures, and stimulated his passions by frequenting plays, and public amusements. Yet his studies were not thrown aside. He devoted much of his time to gaining the knowledge which was needful for his profession of rhetoric. Among other books which he read was "*Hortensius*," a treatise of Cicero now lost, containing an exhortation to the study of philosophy. It fell in his way when he was about eighteen years old, and affected him much, creating a longing in his mind after

something more satisfying than the hopes of the world, though as yet he knew not whither those desires would lead. At this time he began to read the holy Scriptures ; but their great simplicity displeased him, and he deemed them unworthy of the understanding of any but a child.

In this state of mental uncertainty and bodily impurity, he fell a prey to the Manichean heresy. He was seduced by the great boast which its followers made of possessing the truth, and by the apparent reverence which they had for the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit ; for the early lessons of his mother even then kept their hold on his mind. S. Monica was deeply grieved by the error of her son, and refused even to eat with him. But God comforted her in a dream, in which she seemed to be standing on a wooden rule, and a young man in shining garments came and asked her why she was weeping. She answered that she was bewailing the loss of her son. Behold he is with you, he replied ; and presently she saw Augustin standing beside her. She related the dream to him, but he tried to evade its meaning by saying that, as he was, she should one day be. " Nay," she answered without hesitation, " he said not to me, Thou shalt be where he is, but, He shall be where thou art." From that time she lived as usual with her son.

In her grief, she went to entreat a holy bishop to speak to Augustin. He replied that it would be in vain, for her son was then too much elated by the novelty of the heresy ; and foretold that as he continued to read he would discover his error. He also

recommended Monica to pray for him; for the bishop had himself been in his youth beguiled by his mother into the errors of Manes. Monica still continuing in the agony of her grief to urge him, he answered with some impatience, "Go away and God bless thee; the son of these tears shall not be lost." She received his words as an oracle from heaven, and departed in peace.

When Augustin had finished his studies at Carthage, he began to teach rhetoric in his native city. He was much admired for his eloquence, and drew scholars around him, some of whom he led astray into the Manichean errors. Though still enslaved by his passions, mysterious longings after holier paths sometimes visited him. At this time he was much captivated by the science of astrology, but an aged physician persuaded him to abandon it. He had a very dear friend in Tagaste, who had grown up with him from childhood, and whom he had prevailed upon to join the sect of the Manichees. This young man fell sick, and while he lay insensible, he was baptized. When he came to himself, Augustin began to ridicule his baptism. But his friend reproved him, and desired him to forbear from such language. Augustin was astonished at the sudden change; but refrained, hoping that when he should recover he would return to his former belief. But God willed otherwise, and in a few days after, his friend departed to a better life. The sorrow of Augustin was insoluble. As he himself says, "his heart was utterly darkened, and whatever he beheld was death." He left Tagaste, where every thing reminded him of the

dead, and came to Carthage, in his twenty-sixth year. In the society of other friends he by degrees forgot his grief.

He began about this time to distrust the Manichean system, particularly its fabulous history of the world and the celestial bodies. At Carthage he became acquainted with Faustus, an eminent bishop of the sect, to whom he told his doubts. But finding him profoundly ignorant of the constitution of the natural world, which the Manichees pretended to know better than the Catholics, he was confirmed in his distrust of their doctrines. He seems to have taken refuge in the philosophy of the Academy, which taught a universal disbelief in all religious systems. He was advised to go to Rome, for the sake of scholars, and thither he went in the year 383. His mother did all that she could to prevent him, but he escaped from her under pretence of accompanying a friend to the sea-side. His father was then dead.

He had not been long in Rome, before he was attacked by a fever, which brought him to extremity; but he disdained to ask for baptism. He lodged in the house of a Manichee, and was still bound to many of the sect by the ties of friendship. Yet he reproved his host for his faith in the fables of Manes. The citizens of Milan having applied to Symmachus, prefect of Rome, for a professor of rhetoric, Augustin was appointed, through the interest of his Manichean friends. He arrived in Milan in 384. S. Ambrose, who was then bishop of the city, received him with the kindness of a father. Augustin attended his sermons, at first only from curiosity, and for the

sake of the beauty of their style. He found them less winning than the discourses of Faustus, but more learned. Their truth as well as their eloquence, insensibly touched his heart, and he discovered that the Catholic doctrine was at least defensible. He therefore finally resolved to quit the Manichees, and remain a catechumen of the Catholic Church, till more light should dawn upon him.

Monica had followed her son to Milan. So great confidence had she in God, that during a storm which overtook them on their passage from Africa, she encouraged the mariners with the assurance that He would bring them safe to land, that she might rejoin her son. She was not astonished to hear that he had left the Manichees, but answered calmly that "she trusted in Christ, that before she departed from this world she should see him a faithful Catholic." She poured forth prayers and tears more abundantly to God, that He would enlighten his darkness, and she listened devoutly to the discourses of S. Ambrose. For she regarded the holy bishop as an angel of God, knowing that by him Augustin had been brought into his state of doubt. S. Ambrose on his part esteemed her very highly for her singular piety, and often told Augustin how happy he was in having such a mother. All her life she had lived most holy. She was born of Christian parents, who had educated her in the Catholic faith. While her husband was alive she had been a pattern of obedience to him, notwithstanding his profligacy and hasty temper. She was rewarded by seeing him converted, towards the close of his life. In her widowhood she devoted herself to works of mercy and piety. She gave great alms,

and served the poor with her own hands ; and on no day did she fail to assist at the Sacrifice of the altar, which was offered daily at Milan. She went to church every morning and evening, to pray and hear instruction, and was often favoured by God with a foresight of the future.

Besides attending the public sermons of S. Ambrose, Augustin frequently saw him in his own house. For at all hours of the day, those who desired might gain admittance to him. He accounted the bishop happy in the honour which every one paid him, but his life of celibacy seemed hard and forbidding. He did not open his heart to S. Ambrose, as he never found him on those occasions at leisure to attend to him in private. But the discourses of the saint gradually removed his prejudices against the Holy Scriptures. Nebridius and Alypius, two of his intimate friends, had followed him from Africa. Alypius had formerly been one of his scholars, and having studied law at Rome, was then employed as assessor or counsellor to the magistrates. They were both engaged in seeking the truth. Augustin felt the bondage of his passions more and more galling, but could not prevail upon himself to renounce them. By his mother's advice he resolved to marry, and a young person was chosen, to whom he was to be united at the end of two years. The woman with whom he had for some years lived unlawfully returned to Africa, leaving their son Adeodatus with Augustin, and having made a vow of penitence and chastity for the future.

The passage of the light of faith into a heart so impure was slow and painful, but still it advanced

imperceptibly. He now took pleasure in the Holy Scriptures, and had juster ideas of God, though the Divine Person of the Lord Jesus was yet hidden from him. He applied to Simplician, an aged priest, who had instructed S. Ambrose, and whom the bishop loved as his spiritual father. Augustin made a general confession to him of the errors of his past life, and Simplician encouraged him by relating the history of Victorinus, a professor of rhetoric in Rome, who had been received into the Catholic Church not long before. Augustin longed to follow his example, but, as he confesses, "that new will which had begun to be in him, freely to serve God, the only assured pleasantness, was not yet able to overcome his former wilfulness, strengthened by age." In this state of mind, he was one day sitting in his lodging with Alypius, when he received a visit from Pontitian, a Christian fellow-countryman, who held a high office at court. Seeing a book lying on the table, he opened it, and was surprised to find that it was a volume of the writings of S. Paul. For he himself was a devout man, and given to continual prayer. Augustin told him that much of his time was devoted to such studies : and they began to converse about S. Antony and the Egyptian ascetics. Augustin and his friend had never even heard of them. Pontitian then went on to tell them of the monasteries of holy recluses, which peopled the deserts of Egypt, and described their life of austerity and self-discipline. He told them also of a monastery, under the care of S. Ambrose, without the walls of Milan. He then related the story of two officers of the emperor, who, after reading the life of S. Antony, in a religious house

at Treves, had shortly before embraced the monastic discipline.

Augustin was deeply affected by this conversation, and when Pontitian was gone, he cried out to Alypius, What are we doing? The unlearned seize heaven by force, and we with our knowledge, but without heart, are plunged in the lusts of flesh and blood. Are we ashamed to follow them? Is it not more to our shame that we do not follow them? In an agony he rushed into the garden, followed by Alypius, and they sat down together as far from the house as possible. The remembrance of his past sinful pleasures returned upon him with renewed life, and seemed to whisper to him that it was impossible to give them up for ever. "On the other side," it is himself who speaks, "there appeared unto him the chaste dignity of Continence, serene, yet not too gay, honestly alluring him to come, and doubt not, and stretching forth, to receive and embrace him, her holy hands full of multitudes of good examples. So many young men and maidens were there; numbers of youth and of every age; grave widows, and aged virgins; and Continence herself in all, not barren, but a fruitful mother of children of joys, by Thee, her Spouse, O Lord! And she smiled on him with a persuasive mockery, as if she would say, Canst not thou what these youths, what these maidens can? or can they either in themselves, and not rather in the Lord their God? The Lord their God gave me unto them. Why standest thou in thyself, and so standest not? Cast thyself upon Him, fear not, He will receive thee and will heal thee¹." He tore

¹ Conf. viii. 11.

his hair, and beat his breast, and clasped his knees in the terrible struggle. At length, unable to controul himself, he went away from Alypius, and threw himself on the ground beneath a fig-tree, pouring forth torrents of tears, and crying out, How long, O Lord ! when will Thine anger cease ? Why to-morrow, and to-morrow ? Why not now ? Why is there not this hour an end to my uncleanness ?

As he was speaking, he heard a voice, as of a child, repeating several times, *Tolle lege, Tolle lege*, — Take up and read. He began to think whether children ever used such words in their play, but could remember nothing like them. He dried his tears, and considered that God had commanded him to open the book, and read the first words that he should find. And returning to the place where Alypius was, and where he had left the volume of S. Paul's epistles, he opened it, and read, "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying ; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh¹." He then related to Alypius what had happened, who applied to his own case the words which follow, "Him that is weak in the faith receive." They returned to the house and told all to Monica. Her joy in beholding the desire of her heart so abundantly fulfilled, none can know but those holy souls who have felt the same unutterable longings.

Augustin determined to renounce marriage, and all the hopes of this world, and to devote himself wholly to God. He retired with his mother and a few chosen

¹ Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

companions, in the end of the year 386, to the house of a friend at Cassiciacum, not far from Milan. They spent much of their time together, conversing on divine things. He passed many hours of each day in prayer and tears, and the night was given to meditation. The flame of his love and devotion towards God was kindled and kept alive by reading the psalter. When the usual vacation of his class was over, he resigned his office, and requested the Milanese to find another professor of rhetoric. He pleaded bodily weakness as a reason for doing so. He then began to prepare himself for baptism, and wrote to S. Ambrose, confessing his past errors, and begging his advice regarding the part of Holy Scripture most suitable to his state. The bishop recommended the prophecies of Isaiah. But Augustin was unable at that time to understand their meaning. Alypius also was preparing himself for baptism, in deep humility, and with many austerities, with Adeodatus, the son of Augustin, who was then fifteen years of age.

In the spring of the year 387, they returned to Milan, and enrolled their names among the *Competentes*, or candidates for baptism. These attended the instructions of the bishop during Lent. It is supposed that the treatise of S. Ambrose, *De Mysteriis*, was delivered to the catechumens of that year. The chaunts of the Eastern Church had been introduced into Milan only the year before, by the bishop; and Augustin thus describes the feelings which they excited in him; "How did I weep in thy hymns and canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of thy sweetly attuned Church! The voices flowed

into mine ears, and the truth distilled into my heart, whence the affections of my devotion overflowed, and tears ran down, and happy was I therein¹." Those holy sounds reminded him also of the nightly watching of the people in the basilica with their bishop, during the Arian persecution in the year 386; and of the miraculous power with which God endowed the relics of the martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, of which Augustin had been an eye-witness.

On Holy Saturday, 387, S. Ambrose admitted Augustin, Alypius, and Adeodatus, among the other catechumens, into the Catholic Church, by the heavenly washing of baptism. There was once a belief in the Church that the hymn *Te Deum* was composed by inspiration, and chaunted by the bishop and the neophyte, in alternate verses, as they ascended from the baptistery. But the authority for this story is not equal to its beauty, and historians are agreed in rejecting it.

After his baptism, S. Augustin proposed to return to Africa, with his mother, his brother Navigius, who had joined them, Adeodatus, and a youth named Evodius. They rested for a few days at Ostia, on their way. One day S. Monica and her son stood together in a window which looked into the garden of the house where they were staying, and discoursed sweetly together for a long time, of the eternal life of the saints, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." As they conversed, the world with all its joys seemed to be forgotten. Monica said, "Son, what do I here any longer, and to what end I

¹ Conf. ix. 6.

am here, I know not, now that my hopes in this world are accomplished. One thing there was, for which I desired to linger for a while in this life, that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died. My God hath done this for me more abundantly, that I should now see thee, also despising earthly happiness, become His servant; what do I here?" About five days after, she fell sick, and was for a time insensible. When she revived, seeing her friends overwhelmed with grief, she said, Here you shall bury your mother. Navigius lamented that she should die so far from her own land. She looked sadly on him, as if to reprove him, and said to S. Augustin, Behold what he says. Then turning to both, she added, Lay my body where it pleases you; I pray you only to remember me at the altar of God, wherever you are. And so she fell asleep, on the ninth day of her illness, and in the fifty-sixth year of her age.

When her spirit had passed, S. Augustin closed her eyes. Adeodatus burst into loud and violent grief, but was checked by the others. Evodius took the psalter, and began to sing the psalm *Misericordiam et judicium*¹. Many devout persons joined them, and they remained together comforting each other, while the body was prepared for burial. They then offered "the Sacrifice of our ransom" on her behalf, and carried her body to the grave, praying fervently as they went for the repose of her soul. At those last rites S. Augustin shed no tears, but at night and in secret he poured them forth in

¹ 101st. Eng. Psalter.

abundance. For he was afflicted by a twofold grief, for the loss of his mother, and for the power which earthly things still had over him. He besought all who should read his Confessions "to remember his mother and his father Patricius at the altar of God; that so her last request might be more abundantly fulfilled to her in the prayers of many, through his confessions, than through his prayers." The suffrages of the Church have been long since turned to praise. S. Monica is honoured with a festival on the 4th of May.

S. Augustin passed the rest of that year, and the whole of the following, in Rome. His time was chiefly employed in refuting the errors of the Manichees, by his writings as well as in private. In 389, he went to Carthage, where he lodged for a few days with Innocent, a holy man, who had been healed of a dangerous disease by the prayers of a bishop and his clergy. He then retired to his own house near Tagaste, and formed a small community of brethren who devoted themselves to serve God with fasting, and prayer, and good works. This was the beginning of the Order of the Austin Friars, or Eremites of S. Austin. It afterwards became famous in Christendom. The RULE which he enjoined was simple. He urged upon the brethren charity and unanimity, as the distinguishing graces of the Order, and that they should have one heart and one soul in God. The deepest humility also he recommended as the guide of their lives. All that they possessed was in common, even their garments. These were kept in one place under the charge of a brother. They said the prayers, and chaunted the psalms and hymns of the Church, daily in the ora-

tory, at the appointed hours. During the whole day the oratory was left open, that any who desired might resort to it for private devotion. In the refectory they listened to pious reading during meals. Their bodies were subdued by fasting and abstinence, according as the health of each person could endure it. But the sick and infirm were exempted from the strict rules of fasting. It is probable that S. Augustin enjoined manual labour, since he wrote a treatise *On the Labour of Monks*, to prove its obligation on all religious. But he allowed useful studies and spiritual functions to be substituted for it, in the case of those who were able to practise them. The care of the poor was recommended as one of their chief duties. They were not confined at all times to their enclosure, but when they left it they were bound to walk abroad in the company of three of their members at the least, and a calm and recollected behaviour was enjoined in public. When any brother was guilty of a fault, he was to be first privately admonished by the person who observed it, and if it was repeated, then two or three of the community remonstrated with him; and lastly, it was brought before the whole house. The punishment was awarded by the superior, and in extreme cases, by the priest who had the care of the house, or by the bishop. The superior was called *Præpositus*, and was to be obeyed and revered as a father. In all things which exceeded his jurisdiction, the supreme authority lay in the priest, or in the bishop. The Rule was ordered to be read publicly once every week¹.

¹ Epist. 211.

The nuns of this order were governed by the same Rule. Their superior was called *Præposita*, and they were bound to pay her the obedience of daughters. The constant observance of a modest behaviour, particularly in public, was earnestly enjoined on them. All intercourse between the brethren and sisters of the Order was strictly forbidden.

During the retreat of S. Augustin at Tagaste, his son Adeodatus was taken from him by death at the age of eighteen. "In that boy," he confesses, "I had no part but the sin. For that we brought him up in Thy discipline, it was Thou, and none else, that had inspired us with it. I confess unto Thee Thy gifts, O Lord my God. Excellently hadst Thou made him. In wit he surpassed many grave and learned men. That talent struck awe into me. And who but Thou could be the work-master of such wonders? Soon didst Thou take his life from the earth; and I now remember him without anxiety, fearing nothing for his childhood, or his youth, or his whole self'."

After S. Augustin had spent about two years at Tagaste, he had occasion to go to Hippo. Valerius was then bishop, and as he was one day speaking to the people of the necessity of ordaining a priest for his church, they with one consent took S. Augustin, and presented him to the bishop, beseeching him to ordain him. Augustin wept much, to think of the dangers which beset the governors of the Church, and not, as some supposed, because he desired the episcopate. Thus he was admitted to holy orders

⁷ Conf. ix. 6.

early in 391. As he desired still to live in retirement, Valerius gave him a house and garden belonging to the church of Hippo ; and there he assembled all those who aspired to serve God in celibacy and voluntary poverty. He had sold his own little patrimony, and brought nothing to Hippo but the clothes which he wore.

Valerius granted him permission to explain the holy Gospel to the people in his presence ; a privilege which the African bishops then reserved to themselves. S. Augustin begged for time to prepare himself, which was granted ; and at Easter he began to preach with such success, that other bishops soon followed the example of Valerius. His time was also much occupied in opposing the Manichean heresy. He held a public conference with Fortunatus, a priest of the sect, which lasted two days, and in which the fallacies of his adversary were completely exposed.

Aurelius, the newly-elected bishop of Carthage, had written to S. Augustin, to beg his prayers and his good counsel. The saint, in reply, recommended him to correct the abuses which had for some time disgraced the celebration of the festivals of the martyrs ; and particularly the riotous feasts which were often held at their tombs. An African council, which Aurelius summoned in 393, condemned them, and at the same time approved of the ancient and godly custom of offering alms at the tombs of the holy martyrs and of the faithful departed. Such a practice is enjoined in Tobit iv. 17. The people were with great difficulty restrained from violence, so unpopular were the restrictions of the council.

But the eloquence and boldness of S. Augustin persuaded them to yield obedience.

Alypius, his early friend, had returned to Africa, and had been elected bishop of Tagaste. About this time he undertook a journey to the Holy Land, where he saw S. Jerom in his rétreat at Bethlehem. He related to him the history of S. Augustin, and thus laid the foundation of the friendship which afterwards united those great doctors of the Church.

In 394, S. Augustin began to write against the Donatists. Their schismatical party was then possessed of great power in Africa, which they employed in persecuting the Catholics. Some of the most learned of his works were written against them, and his discourses to the people were often directed against their errors. His fame having now spread over the whole of Africa, Valerius feared that he might be taken from Hippo to fill an episcopal see. He therefore wrote to the bishop of Carthage, entreating him to consecrate S. Augustin as his coadjutor in the diocess of Hippo. From this it appears that the canon of the Nicene council, which forbade the consecration of a bishop to a see already full, had not been promulgated in the African Church. Aurelius gave his consent, and S. Augustin was consecrated at Christmas, 395. In the following year he became sole bishop by the death of Valerius.

After his appointment to this high office, his manner of life was simple and unostentatious. He affected neither luxury nor extreme poverty. And that the hospitality which became his office might not interrupt the religious seclusion of his monks, he left their house, and went to live at the house of the

bishop. There he established a community of the clergy, under nearly the same Rule as his former institute. They dined ordinarily on vegetables, but had animal food for their guests, and for the infirm. The vessels of the house were of earth, wood, or marble; the spoons only were of silver. Their table was without a cloth, as indeed was the ancient practice. He lived as one of the community, reserving to himself the right of reproofing the faults of others with mildness. No woman was allowed to enter their dwelling, not even his sister, who was superior of a convent of nuns near Hippo. He visited none but the sick, and the afflicted, and widows, and orphans. The community was chiefly supported by the offerings of the faithful, out of which it relieved many poor persons. A part was also devoted to the constant exercise of hospitality. S. Augustin would not allow them to purchase lands, but they might receive bequests for the use of the Church. All who joined the community were bound to renounce private property. On one occasion the legacy of a clerk was rejected, because he had concealed his own money. S. Augustin seems to have been at first doubtful whether this Rule should be made binding on all the clergy of his diocese. Afterwards he would ordain none who were not ready to conform to it, and those who renounced it were removed from the diocese. Such was the foundation of the renowned order of the Augustinian Canons.

In 397, S. Ambrose died at Milan, and Simplician was appointed his successor. The aged bishop wrote a letter to S. Augustin filled with expressions of friendship and encouragement. In the same year the

third council of Carthage was held. It is remarkable as having been the last Western synod which settled the canon of holy Scripture till the council of Trent, eleven centuries and a half later, which only confirmed the decision of the ancient council regarding the canonical books.

S. Augustin had written to S. Jerom, in 395, remonstrating with him against an interpretation which he had given of the conduct of S. Peter and S. Paul at Antioch¹, in his commentary on holy Scripture. Their correspondence on this subject was renewed at intervals during the next ten years. S. Jerom seems to have acknowledged the justice of S. Augustin's objections.

In 407, the emperor Honorius enacted severe laws against the Donatists and the Manichees, as the principal disturbers of the peace of the Church in Africa. S. Augustin went to Calama in 408, to allay a serious tumult which had taken place in consequence of an attempt made by the clergy to prevent the celebration of a pagan festival. The heathens attacked the Christians, and drove them away with a shower of stones; and when justice was demanded they renewed their violence, burned their church, and killed some of them. The bishop of the place was obliged to conceal himself. The emperor again published his edicts, forbidding the enemies of the Church to hold any assemblies for religious worship.

In 410, Rome was taken and pillaged by Alaric, king of the Goths. Many of the Christians escaped

¹ Gal. ii.

into Africa, and among others Demetrias, a rich and noble lady, with her mother Juliana, and her father's mother, Proba; also Melania, her daughter Albina, and her granddaughter, S. Melania the younger, with her husband Pinian. These were all persons of noble family, but more renowned for their devotion to the holy religion of the Cross. They came to Hippo, to visit S. Augustin, and the people immediately seized Pinian and called upon Augustin to ordain him priest. The bishop refused to do so against the will of Pinian. A violent tumult was excited, which was only appeased by a promise given by Pinian, and ratified by an oath, that if he ever entered holy orders it should be in the church of Hippo. When his mother-in-law, Albina, suggested that such an oath was not binding, as having been exacted by force, S. Augustin entreated her not to suppose so, if the engagement thus ratified were not in itself unlawful. And if it were otherwise, death would be preferable to swearing such an oath.

Owing to the disturbances which then shook the empire, the laws against the Donatists had been relaxed, and they had renewed their former violences. Restitutus, a priest of Hippo, was waylaid and murdered. A council, assembled at Carthage in 410, therefore sent deputies to Honorius, to request his protection. He granted a renewal of the penal acts, and added a rescript, commanding the Donatists to come to a public conference, which should decide their claims. Marcellinus the governor was appointed umpire. S. Augustin had for a long time been labouring to bring the controversy to such an issue. The conference was accordingly held at

Carthage in June 411. Among the bishops chosen on the Catholic side to conduct the debates were S. Augustin and Alypius. It lasted three days, and Marcellinus gave final judgment in favour of the Catholics. The emperor then deprived the heretics of their churches, and banished their clergy from Africa. This was a severe blow to the party, and many of its supporters returned to the communion of the Church. The rest were enraged against S. Augustin as the cause of their defeat, and threatened his life. He escaped on one occasion from a party of Circumcellians who were waiting for him, only by his guide missing his way. Yet he interceded in the behalf of some of them who had incurred the penalties of the law. This he often did for other criminals also. The anger of the Donatists also pursued Marcellinus, and in 413 they accused him of favouring the conspiracy of Heraclian against the emperor, for which he suffered death with his brother Apringius.

No sooner had the Donatists begun to decline, than new enemies arose in the followers of Pelagius. S. Augustin applied himself to meet the danger with fresh ardour, and wrote many treatises against the false principles of the heresy.

In 413 the African Church beheld the consecration of the lady Demetrias to the life of holy virginity. She had secretly made a vow of perpetual celibacy some time before ; and as her mother and grandmother were preparing for her marriage, she one night presented herself before them, arrayed in humble weeds, and told them of her purpose to know no other love than that of her heavenly Spouse, to which she was encouraged, as she said, by the ex-

ample of the blessed martyr S. Agnes. They rejoiced to hear her resolution, and her noble dower was given to the poor. She received the veil from the hands of the bishop of Carthage. Her example incited many others to devote themselves to the same holy life. The report of her sanctity passed into the East, and reached S. Jerom, who wrote to her, recommending manual labour to all who had embraced the life of religion. S. Augustin saw her during his stay at Carthage while the Donatist conference lasted. He afterwards wrote to her on several occasions. Pelagius tried, but in vain, to gain her to his party.

Orosius, a young Spanish priest, who had distinguished himself by his zeal against the Priscillianists and other heretics in Spain, passed into Africa, on his way to the East, in 415. S. Augustin furnished him with letters to S. Jerom. He returned in the following year, bringing with him letters from S. Jerom, and relics of S. Stephen the first martyr, which had been then recently discovered near Jerusalem.

In 417, the Donatists having again disturbed the peace of the Church, S. Augustin wrote to Boniface, the governor, a letter in which he defends the principle of restraining heretics by temporal punishment. He sets forth its usefulness in repressing their excesses, and in bringing back to the Church many doubtful persons. He argues, that if other crimes may be punished, why may not sacrilege; and quotes, as an authority in his favour, the words of our Saviour, "Go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in¹."

¹ S. Luke xiv. 23.

S. Augustin went into Mauritania in 418, to execute a commission with which pope Zozimus had charged him and some other bishops. In Cæsarea, the capital city, he attempted to bring back the Donatist bishop to the Church, but without success. He persuaded the citizens to abolish an annual fight, called *Caterva*, or the Troop, in which the lives of some of them were sacrificed every year.

In 419, violent shocks of earthquake were felt in Palestine, accompanied with an eclipse of the sun, and other unusual appearances, which made some persons think that the end of the world was approaching. Some presumptuous interpreters of prophecy had applied the number of the weeks of Daniel to that time. The bishop of Salona, in Dalmatia, consulted S. Augustin. He referred him to S. Jerom's exposition of holy Scripture, and declared his inability and that of all others to foretel such an event; adding, that though he should wish to know its coming rather than to be ignorant of it, yet, since he could never learn it, he preferred to avow his ignorance, and not to boast of a false knowledge.

About fifteen days before Easter, in the year 425, Paul and his sister Palladia, two cripples from Cæsarea in Cappadocia, arrived at Hippo. They were afflicted with a palsy in every limb, and came to pay their devotions in the church where the relics of S. Stephen were kept. On the morning of Easter-day, as Paul was praying before the relics, he fell into a kind of lethargy, and when he awoke, his infirmity was gone. S. Augustin, and the people, who in great numbers had witnessed the cure, returned public thanks to God. On Easter Tuesday, while he

was preaching to the people on the subject of the miracle, the like grace was accorded to Palladia, and she too was cured amidst the cries of joy of a vast multitude. S. Augustin has commemorated the event in two sermons. The doctrine of the Church at that day regarding the honour which is to be paid to the martyrs he teaches us in these words; "In that life is perfection, to which the martyrs have attained. And therefore ecclesiastical discipline teaches, what the faithful have known, that when the martyrs are named at the altar of God, we do not pray for them, but we pray for the other departed who are commemorated. For it were wrong to pray for the martyrs, to whose prayers we ought to commend ourselves ¹."

In September, 426, S. Augustin appointed Eraclius to succeed him in the see of Hippo. His consecration was not to take place till the decease of S. Augustin. For the rule of the Nicene council was then more strictly observed. Soon after this, the Vandals came over in great numbers from Spain into Africa, laying waste the country, and persecuting the Christians most cruelly. Honoratus, an African bishop, asked the opinion of S. Augustin, whether it was the duty of a Catholic bishop to seek safety from these dangers by flight. Augustin replied, that when the persecution was general, a Christian pastor ought to remain with his flock, and encourage them by his presence. But if the bishop alone was sought for by the persecutor, then he might withdraw.

The Vandals laid siege to Hippo in 430. S.

¹ Serm. 159.

Augustin and his clerks cried earnestly to God to deliver them from their hands. In the third month of the siege, he was attacked by a violent fever, but continued to perform the duties of his office while his strength lasted. At length he was confined to his couch, and felt his end approaching. He thought that no Christian should leave the world without the deepest penitence, and accordingly, to excite his own he had the penitential psalms affixed to the walls of his chamber, near his bed. He recited them continually, with many tears. About ten days before he departed, he desired that no one should enter his chamber, except at the hours when his physician visited him, and when his food was brought. The rest of the time he passed in solitude, and in unceasing prayer. On the 28th of August he yielded up his soul to Christ in the presence of his clerks and religious brethren, who assisted him in his agony with their prayers. Many bishops came to his funeral, and the adorable Sacrifice was solemnly offered for his soul. His books, which were all that he possessed in the world, he left to the church of Hippo. Many miracles attested his admission into the society of the Saints.

A short time after his decease, some priests in Gaul ventured to call in question his doctrine. Pope Celestin, in 431, wrote in his defence, and declared him "a man of holy memory, who has ever been in our communion, for his merit, and against whom there has never been a suspicion of evil; his learning was so great, that our predecessors have enrolled him among the doctors; he was loved and honoured by all the world."

His body was laid in the church of S. Stephen, where it rested for nearly fifty years. When the African bishops were banished into Sardinia by Huneric, they carried it with them, and many miracles were performed as it passed. About the year 710, Luitprand, king of Lombardy, purchased it from the Sarazins, who were then masters of Sardinia, for a large sum of money, and translated it with great honour to Pavia. It was solemnly carried into the church of S. Peter in that city, on the 28th of February. This church was afterwards named in honour of S. Augustin, and is now served by Canons Regular and by Hermits of his Order. His festival was observed at Carthage in the sixth age. It is a holyday of obligation in all the Spanish dominions.

In the same year as S. Augustin deceased, the third general council was summoned to meet at Ephesus. S. Augustin was invited to be present; but when the messenger of Theodosius arrived at Hippo, he found that the saint had departed.

The writings of S. Augustin are very numerous. Many of them were composed in refutation of the prevailing heresies of his age. The principal of them are treatises, *On Order*, *On the Master*, and *On Music*; *On Freewill*, *On the Manners of the Church*, and *On the true Religion*, against the Manichees; *On Baptism*, against the Donatists; *On the Trinity*, against the Arians; and *On Nature and Grace*, against the Pelagians. He also wrote commentaries on various parts of the holy Gospels; *Enarrations*, or discourses on the psalms; *Enchiridion*, or a manual of the Christian religion; besides many sermons and epistles. In 397 he composed his *Con-*

fessions, which remain a lasting memorial of his penitence, for the comfort and encouragement of all who have followed in the same blessed course. One of his greatest works is his treatise *On the City of God*. It was begun in 413, and occupied him for thirteen years. In 428, he wrote a book of *Retractions*, or corrections of errors in his former works. In it he enumerates ninety-three separate treatises.

The four great Orders of religious in Christendom are the Benedictine, the Augustinian, and the Franciscan, in the West; and that of S. Basil, in the East. Many distinguished branches of the monastic bodies have adopted the Rule of S. Augustin, as the foundation of their own. In some instances their own particular constitutions prevented a perfect imitation of their great model, but in its chief points they followed it as closely as possible. The most renowned of these branches are the following: the Regular Canons of S. Austin, who did not attain their greatest fame till the twelfth century, when Pope Innocent II. in the Lateran council of 1139, finally enjoined them to adopt the rule of S. Augustin. Before that time, the name of Regular Canons was often given to the Secular Canons, who were without any Rule, to distinguish them from the parochial clergy. The Canons Præmonstratenses, or White Canons, founded by S. Norbert, archbishop of Magdeburgh, at Præmonstratum, in Picardy, about the year 1120. The Sempringham, or Gilbertine Canons, instituted at Sempringham, in Lincolnshire, in 1148, by S. Gilbert. The houses of this order had brethren and sisters living under the same roof, though strictly separated. The men followed

the Rule of S. Augustin, and the women the Cistercian reform of the Rule of S. Benedict. The Austin Friars, or Friars Eremites, had their origin, as we have seen, in the community at Tagaste. Their order was wholly destroyed in Africa by the Vandals, but was revived in Europe in several congregations, which were all united in one Order by pope Alexander IV. in 1254. Their present constitutions were compiled in 1287. They were declared, by S. Pius V. in 1567, one of the four Mendicant Orders, and take rank in processions after the Dominican and Franciscan, and before the Carmelite, or White Friars. The Crossed, or Crouched Friars, instituted, or at least reformed, by Gerard, prior of S. Mary of Morello, at Bologna, and confirmed by pope Alexander III. in 1169. The Trinitarian, or Maturine Friars, or of the Holy Trinity, for the redemption of captives, sometimes also called Red Friars, were founded by S. John de Matha and S. Felix de Valois, in France, in 1197. The Dominican, or Preaching Friars, called from their habit Black Friars, and in France, Jacobins, from their first house in Paris being in the Rue S. Jacques; their great founder, S. Dominic, was born in 1170, in the Diocese of Osma, in Old Castile. His order was confirmed by pope Innocent III. in the Lateran council, 1215. The Brigittin Nuns, or Nuns of our Holy Saviour, instituted in the fourteenth century by S. Brigit, duchess of Nericia, in Sweden. Besides these religious Orders, the two great military Orders of the Knights Hospitallers and Knights Templars adopted the Rule of S. Augustin. The former, called of S. John of Jerusalem, afterwards of Rhodes, and still more recently of

Malta, were first named from the hospital of S. John Baptist in Jerusalem, which was built in the eleventh century for the comfort of pilgrims coming to the Holy Sepulchre. The Order was founded in 1092, for the protection of the pilgrims on their way thither. The Knights Templars, so called from their first house adjoining the temple at Jerusalem, were instituted in 1118, for a similar purpose. They were suppressed, with circumstances of great cruelty, by Clement V. in the council of Vienne, 1312.

Before the sixteenth century, there were more than four hundred religious houses in Great Britain under the Rule of S. Augustin.

As when the sun hath climbed a cloudy mass,
And looks at noon on some cathedral dim,
Each limb, each fold, in the translucent glass,
Breaks into hues of radiant seraphim ;

So, sainted bishop ! in the lettered store
Which still enfolds thy spirit, fled from sight,
Comment, prayer, homily, or learned lore,
Christ bathes each part with His transforming light

Late risen in thee. Thence all is eloquent
With flowing sweetness ; o'er each rising pause
Thou build'st in untired strength ; through all is sent
The word pleading for His most righteous laws.

For thy sick soul, by baptism's seal relieved,
Deep in her brackish founts the all-healing Cross received.
Cathedral, p. 295.

MANES, or Manichæus, the founder of the sect which bore his name, was born in Chaldea, in the middle of the third century. He was originally a Christian

priest, but having been led astray by the extravagant opinions of the Persian Magi, he was excommunicated by the Church. He lived at the court of Persia, and died in 277. He borrowed many of his opinions from the system of Zoroaster, and from Buddhism. His fundamental error was a belief in an evil as well as a good principle in the universe, represented under the figure of darkness and light. All material things, as he taught, were created by the evil principle. Hence, whatever tended to perpetuate or reproduce matter he condemned as sinful, as for example holy matrimony. His followers were divided into the Elect or Perfect, and the Hearers. The former renounced marriage as sinful, and for the same reason abstained from animal food. The Masters or Apostles, and the bishops, priests, and deacons of the sect were chosen from them. Many other errors and excesses disgraced his followers. They maintained that our Lord Jesus was born, and suffered, and rose again only in appearance. They believed in the transmigration of souls, and denied the general resurrection of the flesh. They kept a few of the Christian festivals, and celebrated a Eucharist with water in the chalice, instead of wine and water mixed, as in the Catholic Church. They prevailed much in the East and in Africa during the centuries immediately following their first appearance. Afterwards they seem to have spread westwards by way of Austria; and they reappeared in the thirteenth century in the sect of the Albigenses¹, whom some modern historians

¹ See Bossuet *Histoire des Variations*, Liv. xi. Also the *History of the Albigenses* by the Rev. S. R. Maitland, and his letter to the Rev. Dr. Mill, on the same subject.

would represent as the preservers of the holy Catholic Faith during the night of the dark ages,—ages whose darkness, illuminated by a S. Bernard, a S. Thomas Aquinas, a S. Bonaventura, and innumerable others, shone upon the humble and meek of heart, like heaven's own blessed light.

Such a sect as the Manichees the holy Apostle Paul had foretold in his first Epistle to Timothy¹. Far different from their condemnation of holy matrimony is the doctrine of the Catholic Church, which invests it with a sacramental mystery², while she counsels her saints to follow “a more excellent way.” And with S. Paul she still teaches that “every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving,” while she follows the steps of her Lord in painful fasts and abstinence. “To abstain sometimes from certain meats, not because the meats are evil, but because they are not necessary; this abstinence, saith S. Augustin, is not evil. And to restrain the use of meats when necessity and time shall require, this, saith he, doth properly belong to Christian men³.”

AUGUST 29.

Beheading of S. John Baptist.

Two festivals of S. John Baptist are contained in the Kalendar; one, on the 24th of June, which com-

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

² Ephes. v. 32.

³ Homily on Fasting, part ii.

memorates his miraculous birth ; and this, which keeps alive the memory of his death. But because his birth was more nearly connected with the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is annually observed by the Church with greater solemnity than the day of his beheading. Although he was not honoured to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, for the Lord Himself, the King of Martyrs, went before all others in this, yet inasmuch as he gave up his life in the cause of truth, chastity, and justice, he is rightly esteemed a martyr.

In the thirty-first year of the Incarnation, the Saviour was baptized by S. John in the waters of Jordan. And before the end of the same year the holy Baptist was cast into prison. Thus his own prophecy began to be fulfilled, that the Lord must increase, while he himself must decrease. He had provoked the anger of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, by reproving him for having espoused Herodias, the wife of his brother Herod Philip. Antipas, Philip, and Aristobulus, the father of Herodias, and of Herod Agrippa king of Judea, were the sons of Herod the Great, by different marriages. Herod Antipas had divorced his own wife, Aretas, the daughter of the king of Arabia. And Herodias had in the same manner been separated from her husband, and now lived with his brother. She had a daughter, named Salome, by her former marriage.

Her indignation against the bold reprovcr of her sin far exceeded that of Herod, and his death alone could satisfy her revenge. But Herod was afraid to indulge her ; he even regarded S. John with veneration, and listened to his discourse. The Baptist, while he lay in prison, sent his disciples to Jesus,

that they might behold the miracles which He performed, and might recognize in Him the Christ of Whom their master had been the Precursor. For they seem, as well as the Pharisees, to have distrusted the total absence of all austerity which marked the outward life of the Lord. On that occasion He bore testimony to the great office which S. John had fulfilled, in these words, " Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The scene of his martyrdom, and the shameful causes which brought it about, are thus described by S. Mark, in the words of the holy Gospel which is appointed for this day, in the Latin Church.

" Herod himself had sent forth, and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife : for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him, but she could not. For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him ; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chiefs of Galilee ; and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half

of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought; and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb¹." S. Matthew adds, that "they went and told Jesus."

It is observed by S. Jerom, that the only two persons whose celebration of their birthdays is mentioned in holy Scripture are Pharaoh and Herod; and that on both of these occasions the festivity was marked by blood. It is certain that the Christian anniversaries of the faithful living are the days of their new birth in baptism; and of the departed, the days of their passage from this world of shadows. S. Gregory Nazianzen remarks that the Baptist had foretold his own martyrdom, in the words which he used when the Lord Jesus went to be baptized by him; "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" For in other places of holy Scripture, the baptism of Christ signifies martyrdom².

¹ S. Mark vi. 17—29.

² As in S. Matt. xx. 23. compared with S. Luke xii. 50.

And as if he had said, "Thou comest to me."—Thou, my Lord, shalt come after me to hell, whither I shall shortly go, by a bloody death. This idea is also suggested by the Preface for this day in the Sacramentary of S. Gregory. "It is very worthy and just, right and salutary, that we should always and everywhere give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God: Who didst endow the Precursor of Thy Son with so great an honour as that, for preaching the truth, he was beheaded: and he who had baptized Christ with water was in spirit baptized by Him, and for Him was stained with his own blood. He was indeed the preacher of Truth, which is Christ, and by forbidding Herod his brother's nuptial couch was thrust into the darkness of a prison, where he enjoyed the light of Thy Divinity alone. Then he suffered the punishment of death, and descended into hell, as the precursor of his Lord: and Him Whom in the world he had pointed out with his finger, he went before, by a precious death, to the place of the departed. And therefore with angels."

The martyrdom of the blessed Precursor happened probably not long before Easter in the year 32. The Greek and Latin Churches celebrate it on the 29th of August, under the name of the Decollation of S. John Baptist. This was probably the day when a translation of his remains took place, or perhaps when the church in Alexandria was consecrated in his honour, on the ruins of the temple of Serapis, in the end of the fourth century. This festival was known in the Western Church before the time of S. Gregory, and it is marked in the martyrologies of Ven.

Bede, Usuard, and others; also in several ancient Roman kalendars.

It is said that the cruelty of Herodias was not satisfied by the sight of the Baptist's head, and that, like the wife of Antony with the head of Cicero, she pierced his tongue with a bodkin. But the anger of God followed his murderers, and overtook them even in this world. We learn from holy Scripture that Herod was frequently alarmed by reports which were brought to him of the miracles of the Lord Jesus, and thought that S. John was risen from the dead. The father of Aretas made war upon him, for the insult which he had offered to his daughter, and cut off his army. And not many years after, he was persuaded by Herodias to go to Rome, to solicit the title of king from the Emperor Caligula. But he fell under the imperial displeasure, and was deprived of his office, and was banished with Herodias into Gaul, where he perished miserably at Lyons, as it is most probable. Some historians say that he wandered into Spain, and there ended his life.

The remains of the holy martyr were buried at Sebaste, or Samaria, and became renowned for miracles. Julian the Apostate, in the middle of the fourth century, gave orders that his tomb should be opened, and that his bones should be scattered in the fields. But they continued not the less fruitful in miracles, and he then commanded that they should be burnt. Some of them were rescued by the Christians, who entrusted them to the care of Philip, an abbat of Jerusalem. He, deeming himself unworthy of possessing such a treasure, sent them to S. Athanasius at Alexandria. The holy bishop laid them under the

altar of his church, and foretold that the time would come when they should be more honourably distinguished. Accordingly, when Theodosius the Great had demolished the temple of Serapis, at Alexandria, he built on its site a glorious church under the invocation of S. John Baptist, and his relics were enshrined in it with great solemnity in the year 395, or 396. Portions of them were distributed among other churches. Thus Theodoret, the great historian, and bishop of Cyprus in the fifth century, obtained some of them for his church, and relates the miraculous favours which were granted to his diocess through the intercession of this glorious saint.

His tomb at Samaria was still honoured by the faithful, and demons were cast out, and other miracles were performed at it. Such events were not unusual even at the empty tombs of the saints, as S. Gregory Nazianzen testifies. They were the work of God and not of the saint; and when the faith and devotion of the Christian people were thus displayed in the honour which they paid to the place where the blessed remains had once rested, God was pleased to reward their piety. It is thus also that the miracles which are reported to have been performed with double relics may be explained, without rejecting the whole as a fiction¹. But in every case, each fact that is alleged must stand or fall by its own evidence. The existence of miracles in all ages the Church has never doubted; she only demands the best proof, first, that such events took place, and then, that they were really supernatural.

The head of S. John was discovered at Emesa, in

¹ See Mabillon, *De cultu SS. incognit.* xviii.

Syria, in the year 453. Marcellus, an abbat who lived there, was directed in a dream where to find it; and he has related the history of its discovery. It had been carried thither, probably by some faithful disciple, after the malice of Herodias had done its worst. On the 24th of February, it was translated into the bishop's church; and, not long after, a new church was dedicated in its honour. Finally, in 760, a still larger building was erected to receive it, where numerous miracles continued to make it illustrious, even after the Sarazins were in possession of the city.

Thence it was translated to Constantinople, in the beginning of the ninth century. Wallo de Sarton, a canon of the church of Amiens, was present when the French took Constantinople in 1204, and obtained nearly the whole of this precious relic. He brought it to Amiens, where it is still preserved. Other churches in France also claim the possession of part of the remains of the holy Baptist.

Careless of thine own honour, thou to cease
 Didst hasten, like the star before the day,
 Willing thyself to vanish hence away,—
 'Tis meet that thou depart, and He increase.

But not alone shalt thou with thy life's breath
 Bear witness,—one thing yet to thee remains,
 Boldly the truth to speak, and bear the chains,
 And go before thy Lord in murderous death.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 214.

SEPTEMBER.

SEPTEMBER 1.

S. Giles, Abbat and Confessor.

ABOUT 724.

S. GILES, or ÆGIDIUS, was born at Athens, about the middle of the seventh century. His family was noble, and, as some say, of royal descent. While he was still young, he sold his patrimony, and left his native country, that he might serve God in retirement. He arrived in Provence in the year 666, according to the best authorities. He at first chose a retreat near Arles, whence he has often been confounded with another Giles, who lived a century and a half earlier, and who was sent on an embassy to Rome by S. Cæsarius, archbishop of Arles, in 514.

S. Giles then retired, for the sake of more perfect solitude and disengagement from the world, into a forest near the river Gardo, in the diocese of Nismes. He took with him only one companion, Veredemus, who lived with him on the fruits of the earth, and the milk of a hind. As Flavius Wamba, a king of the Goths, was one day hunting in the neighbourhood of

Nismes, his dogs pursued her to the hermitage of the saint, where she took refuge. The king was astonished to find the holy man in such a wild region. He treated him with great reverence, and tried to prevail on him to leave his solitude. But finding it in vain, he gave him land for the endowment of a monastery, which was founded probably in 673. The spot where it stood was called Vallis Flaviana, from the name of the royal founder. It was gradually filled with monks of the Benedictine order ; but in later years it came into the possession of secular canons. Its constitutions were submitted in 684 to the approval of pope Benedict II. who bestowed upon it many exemptions and privileges.

In the government of this house S. Giles spent more than fifty years of his life. During the invasion of the Sarazins in 720, he fled with his monks into the central part of France, and was invited by Charles Martel to take refuge at Orleans, where his court then was. In 721, Eudo, duke of Aquitain, defeated the infidels, in a battle fought near Toulouse, and drove them out of the kingdom. S. Giles then returned to his abbey, and died there, before the second incursion of the Sarazins in 725.

His sanctity was attested by miracles, and was publicly honoured in the ninth age, though his name does not appear in the martyrologies of that time. Before the end of the eleventh century his fame had been carried into Hungary. In Germany many churches and monasteries were dedicated in his honour. About the middle of the thirteenth age, Pope Urban IV. appointed a commemoration of him to be made in the office of the 1st of September, which was confirmed

and slightly altered by S. Pius V. three centuries later. S. Giles has always been highly venerated in France and Belgium, and in other countries. In Britain, at this day, many churches bear his name. In 1117, Matilda, the wife of king Henry I., founded an hospital for lepers without the walls of the city of London, under his invocation. It gave its name to the parish in which it was situated, and afterwards became a cell to the hospital of Burton S. Lazarus of Jerusalem. The master and brethren of S. Giles used formerly to present a bowl of ale to every felon, as he passed their gate on his way to Tyburn.

S. Giles is the patron or tutelar saint of Edinburgh. In the fifteenth century, during the reign of king James II., Preston of Gorton brought an arm bone of the saint to the Scottish capital, by the favour of the king of France. He bestowed it on the church of S. Giles, and the magistrates, out of gratitude, granted a charter to his heirs, in virtue of which they had the right to bear the holy relic in all public processions. The citizens also founded and endowed an altar, and appointed an annual solemn mass of requiem to be sung for the soul of the donor. The relic was enshrined in silver, and was preserved with becoming honour till the ancient faith was abolished. It was then destroyed, and its costly shrine, with the other sacred vessels of the church, was sold for the benefit of the corporation.

The parish church of Edinburgh was probably founded in 854. It certainly existed under the invocation of S. Giles in 1359. Part of the building, of which the wreck still remains, was finished in 1380. In 1387, the aisles on the south side were added;

and in 1462, the choir was built. It was then within the diocess of S. Andrew's, and in the patronage of the bishop of Lindisfarne, and afterwards of the abbat and canons of Dunfermline. It once contained about forty altars, dedicated in honour of the saints. King James III., in 1466, erected it into a collegiate church, with a provost, a curate, sixteen prebendaries, a minister of the choir, four choristers, a sacristan, and a beadle. Of later events I cannot speak, for very shame and grief of heart. "O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem a heap of stones. The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air, and the flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the land. . . . Lord, how long wilt Thou be angry; shall Thy jealousy burn like fire for ever? . . . O remember not our old sins, but have mercy upon us, and that soon, for we are come to great misery."

Israel yet hath thousands sealed,
Who to Baal never kneeled;
Seize the banner, spread its fold!
Seize it with no faltering hold!
Spread its foldings high and fair,
Let all see the Cross is there!

God will aid the work begun,
For the love of His dear Son;
He will breathe in their true breath,
Who, serene in prayer and faith,
Would our dying embers fan
Bright as when their glow began.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 223.

SEPTEMBER 7.

S. Enurchus, Bishop.

340.

S. ENURCHUS, or EVURTIUS, a subdeacon of the Roman Church, came into Gaul early in the fourth century. More than fifty years before, a band of missionaries had been sent from Rome to teach the faith in that country, as we have already seen in the life of S. Lucian. S. Enurchus was chosen bishop of Orleans, and in the second year after his election, he saved the city from being destroyed by fire. He consecrated a church in honour of the Holy Cross, with some of its precious fragments which he had obtained from Jerusalem, through the kindness of the emperor Constantine. He laboured for more than twenty years in abolishing pagan superstition. And after having converted nearly the whole city to the Christian faith, he was taken to rest about the year 340. The vault in which he was buried was afterwards enlarged into a church, and became the cemetery of the bishops of Orleans. His name is famous in the western martyrologies, though few particulars of his life have been preserved. Three translations have been made of his relics. A celebrated abbey at Orleans bears his name. He is not now included in the Roman kalendar, but he is honoured with a commemoration, in the Parisian and other French breviaries, on the 7th of September.

It seemed the gathering of past years,
The place of penitence and tears :

And where in cell or roofless shrine
 The saintly dead in peace recline,
 In thoughts of them that slumber by,
 We seem to feel the Judgment nigh,
 And from the fellowship that's there,
 Shrink with a something like despair :—
 To think that when we rise again,
 We must awake 'mid holy men ;
 'Mid those who so could live and die
 With pure resolve and purpose high,
 As thus to leave for days to come,
 A fragrance breathing o'er their tomb.

Baptistery, p. 193.

SEPTEMBER 8.

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

WITH joy let us once again hail the return of the blessed name of Mary in the Kalendar. For the Catholic Church knows nothing of the discoveries of modern wisdom, that to dishonour the Mother is to honour the Son, or that the best means to keep Him in remembrance is wholly to forget her. And although God has concealed from us the circumstances of her birth, and the graces which He bestowed on her, yet we cannot praise Him enough for all that we owe to the Fruit of her womb ; and therefore we are bid to hasten to do honour to His Mother in the first hour of her life. And enough has been revealed to make it a willing service to every grateful heart. Some of the events in her life which holy Scripture has recorded have already passed before us ; and on this, the last of her annual festivals, we may contemplate the part which she was honoured to bear in the great

mystery of godliness. For although two of the more solemn festivals in the year are kept in her honour, and the narrative of her history might seem more properly to belong to one of these, inasmuch as she is exalted by the grace of her Lord far above saint or angel; yet as the feasts of her Annunciation and Purification commemorate other and still more glorious events, the day of her Nativity is the fittest for gathering into one view all that we know of her life.

Her Nativity is celebrated, as Durandus remarks, because she was sanctified in the womb, according to the psalm, *The Lord hath sanctified His tabernacle.* For the same reason the Church honours the nativity of S. John the Precursor, who even before his birth acknowledged the presence of his Lord, by the aid of the Holy Ghost. We have already admired the grace and high favour which rested upon our Blessed Ladye S. Mary in her conception; and we have heard many holy fathers of the Church bear testimony to the pious belief that she was free from the taint of original and all other sin. And as we follow her course through joys and sorrows till she was reunited to her adorable Son in His kingdom, the words of Peter, abbat of S. Remi, to Nicolaus, a monk of S. Alban's, may teach us the frame of mind which becomes such studies: "We both seek devotion of heart, not verbosity of mouth; secret admiration, not public discussion. We both run to follow her, and I wish it may be towards her. You praise the Blessed Virgin, and I also; you proclaim her holy, and I also; you exalt her above the choir of angels, and I also; you say that she was free from all sin,

and I also. In this offering of veneration I go with you and think with you ; but if you wish to fabricate any new form of language contrary to that which is approved by the see of Peter, whose office it is to approve or to condemn the order of the universal Church, then I stand firm and pass not the forbidden bounds. And you did well to concede to me that many things are presumed of the Blessed Virgin, which are no where read ; and that we are to stand to such presumptions until the contrary can be proved¹."

Nothing is certainly known of the family or parents of the holy Virgin. There is a tradition in the Church that her father's name was Joachim ; and her mother S. Anne is commemorated, as we have seen, in the Anglican Kalendar, on the 26th of July. The genealogies of our Lord which are given by S. Matthew and S. Luke, trace the descent of S. Joseph, His reputed father, and not His mother's, as it seems at first. Various reasons are given for this. By some it is maintained to be contrary to the order of Scripture to reckon genealogies through women. Others allege that it was done in order that no reproach might seem to be cast on her husband S. Joseph, since nothing of the truth was lost by such a method of reckoning, for S. Joseph and S. Mary were both descended from the royal line of David, of the tribe of Judah, and their genealogy was therefore the same. "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," according to S. Matthew², is sung as the Gospel of this day at Mass in the Latin Church. S.

¹ *Mores Catholici*, b. vii. c. 6.

² Chap. i. 1—16.

Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and the mother of S. James the Less and of Joseph, was the sister of the Blessed Virgin, as S. John relates¹. This was understood literally by many of the fathers, though some have explained it according to the wider meaning which Scripture sometimes gives to the name of brother or sister. The Blessed Virgin was also related to S. Elizabeth, the mother of S. John Baptist. "Many before her were called Mary," says S. Ambrose, "for the sister of Aaron was so named. But Mary means the bitterness of the sea. So the Lord comes in the bitterness of human frailty, to sweeten the bitterness of our condition, and temper it with the sweetness and grace of the celestial word²." S. Isidore, bishop of Seville, in the seventh century, interprets her name to mean "*Stella Maris*—the Star of the sea; for she gave birth to the Light of the world." So also S. Bernard says, that "the Virgin-Mother is well compared to a star, because as a star sends forth its ray without injury to itself, so she brought forth her Son without prejudice to her virginity." These quotations are mentioned with approbation by bishop Pearson, in his *Exposition of the Creed*.

We may learn how the Blessed Mary spent her childhood and early youth from the gracious assurance of the angel, that she had "found favour with God." "To this man will I look," saith the Lord, "even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word³." The devotion of her tender years to His service has been celebrated by many holy fathers. Among these are SS. Hilary,

¹ Chap. xix. 25.

² De Inst. Virg. c. v.

³ Isa. lxvi. 2.

Ambrose, Augustin, Chrysostom, and Epiphanius. They attest the belief of the Church that she had dedicated herself to God by a vow of perpetual celibacy. It was then the most ardent wish of every Jewish maiden to be married, that, as she hoped, she might perchance become the mother of the future Messiah. But, as these ancient writers testify, the Blessed Mary was the first to embrace a life whose pattern she beheld only in heaven. Hence she is justly called the Queen of Virgins,—of that spotless company “whose hearts none save their Lord can to the full possess.” “Illustrious then was Mary,” cries S. Ambrose, “who first displayed the ensign of holy virginity, and set up the standard of inviolate integrity.” This belief is confirmed by Scripture. For if we compare her words to the angel¹ with the testimony of S. Matthew² and of S. Luke³, that she was espoused to S. Joseph, we shall find at least a very strong presumption that it was even as those holy fathers have said. For what cause of wonder was there, that a maiden espoused to a man should in due time become a mother, or what need of inquiring, as the Blessed Mary did, how it should come to pass, even if she was then only looking forward to her marriage with S. Joseph? For the words of the angel which gave rise to her inquiry necessarily implied nothing supernatural, or which might not have been fulfilled in the ordinary course, as far as at first sight appeared. Her wonder was, not how so great honour and dignity should descend upon the child of one so lowly as herself, but how a child

¹ S. Luke i. 34.² S. Matt. i. 18.³ S. Luke i. 27.

should be born, seeing she "knew not a man." It is true that S. Matthew and S. Luke, in the passages which I have quoted, use the word "espoused" instead of "married." But S. Luke¹ employs the same word, when he describes S. Mary as on the eve of the birth of our Lord, when no one doubts that she was married, as well as espoused, to S. Joseph, for otherwise the great end of God in her marriage would not have been gained, as we shall presently see. S. Matthew expressly declares that she was married to S. Joseph before the birth of Christ, and at the very time when he mentions her as espoused to him, he speaks of him as her husband². The Evangelist in the same place relates the appearance of the angel in a dream to Joseph, which happened soon after the return of S. Mary to Nazareth from the house of S. Elizabeth, three months after the Annunciation, and consequently six months before the Nativity of our Lord. We must therefore believe that the holy Virgin and S. Joseph were married before that time, and that he did not then only for the first time "take unto him his wife;" otherwise the honour of the Blessed Maiden would have been endangered in the eyes of men. For the unanimous tradition of the Church teaches us, that the chief design of God in giving a husband to S. Mary was that, as the Eternal Wisdom must be born of a Virgin, her honour and stainless purity, as well as His Divine Son's, might be screened from the malignant tongue of calumny. God was willing that some should doubt the miracle of His birth, rather than that the breath of suspicion

¹ S. Luke ii. 5.

² S. Matt. i. 19.

should pass upon the chastity of His Mother. The holy martyr S. Ignatius of Antioch, the disciple of S. John, has taught us another reason for the marriage of S. Mary, that the prince of this world might not know her to be a virgin, nor the manner in which her Son was conceived, and might thus for a time be ignorant that He was more than a common child. Not, as S. Bernard says, that God feared lest all the power of the devils should hinder His mercy towards mankind from attaining its final triumph, nor as if He could not easily have preserved the honour of His Son and of the Blessed Virgin from the calumnies of the Jews, or have prevented them from arising. But He chooses times when we shall admire His power, and others when we shall adore His wisdom. Silence was more befitting a mystery designed to abase our pride and teach us humility. And since, by deceiving a woman, the devil had overcome the first man, it was just that he himself should be beguiled by a virgin, so that in the end he might be vanquished by the Second Man, the Lord from heaven.

Accordingly, we observe, throughout the whole life of our Blessed Lord, that He was always reputed among the Jews the son of S. Joseph and S. Mary. In the city of Nazareth, where He was best known, the people said of Him, when they beheld His miracles, and heard His words, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary?"

The ancient belief then in the holy vow of S. Mary

¹ S. Matt. xiii. 54, 55.

is not inconsistent with her marriage, and is rather confirmed by Scripture. The word "espoused," which at first presents a difficulty, may have been used for the very purpose of expressing the angelic union of the Blessed Maiden and her husband. Instances are not wanting in the annals of the Catholic Church, of virgin souls who thus concealed their dedication to Christ under the veil of holy matrimony.

S. Mary is generally believed to have been very young when she was espoused to S. Joseph; perhaps she was not more than fourteen years old. Though descended from kings, her husband was a humble carpenter, but in the holy Gospel he bears the honourable title of "a just man." His home was in Nazareth, a city of Galilee, where S. Mary lived with him. And now the fulness of time drew near, which prophets and kings and holy men of old had beheld afar off, with wonder and devout joy. The words of Isaiah were about to be accomplished, "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel¹."

It belongs to the contemplations of other festivals to trace all the circumstances which attended the Incarnation of our Divine Saviour. Suffice it now to behold what happened to our Ladye herself. The Evangelist S. Luke has recorded the salutation with which the angel S. Gabriel greeted her; "Hail, full of grace², blessed art thou among women." He found her in her chamber, alone, and far removed from the society of men, and he bestowed on her praise from

¹ Isa. vii. 14.

² Or, highly favoured.

God, such as no earthly creature had ever before received. Hence S. Ambrose remarks, that she is "a model to all virgins, in purity and humility and love of retirement." She was troubled at the presence of the angel, for her lowly heart was pained to hear her own praise, and her virgin modesty was alarmed by the sight of a man. But the angel said to her, "Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favour with God." When he had announced to her the high destiny which awaited her, she asked, "How shall this be ;" not that she doubted, like Zacharias, the truth of the Divine promise, but that she might be taught in what manner God would have it accomplished, and might conform in every thing to His blessed will. Then the angel assured her that the Holy Spirit should bring it all to pass, and for the confirmation of her faith, told her of the miraculous conception of her cousin Elizabeth. And she answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word." "What humility ! What devotion ! She calls herself the handmaid of the Lord, who is chosen to be His Mother ; she is not lifted up by the sudden promise. And by calling herself a handmaid, she who was willing to do what she was commanded, claimed from such grace no superiority for herself. The Mother of the Meek and Lowly ought herself to esteem humility¹."

Holy Church has from very ancient days commemorated the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, as one of her most joyous festivals. For then was conceived of her pure substance the Body

¹ S. Amb. in S. Luc. c. i.

of the Lord Jesus, Which, once suffering and mortal, was offered for our sins on the Rood; and now dwells in glory at the right hand of God, and on the altars of the Catholic Church, as the heavenly Food of pilgrims, veiled under the Sacramental species. By stooping so low as to take on Him our nature, He consecrated the fruitfulness of holy marriage, without impairing the spotless honour and the pre-eminence of virginity. For faith alone and the operation of the Holy Ghost had part in His Incarnation. "Go forth, O ye daughters of Jerusalem," exclaims S. Ambrose in the language of the Song of songs, "and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart¹. Blessed is the Mother of Jesus," he proceeds, "blessed is the womb of Mary, which crowned such a Lord. She crowned Him when she conceived Him; for although she formed Him without any operation of her own, since the Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin, yet she conceived and bare Him, and placed upon His head a crown of eternal piety²."

The Blessed Maiden then, having conceived her God, went to visit her cousin S. Elizabeth. She thus showed that the choice which God had made of her had only increased her humility. For she did not go as if she doubted the angel's word, but to rejoice with her cousin, and to render her the assistance which she needed. The course of the sacred year has already brought us to the festival of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin. She returned, after three

¹ Cant. iii. 11.

² De Inst. Virg. c. xvi.

months, to Nazareth, but whether she was present at the birth of S. John Baptist, or not, is doubtful.

The events of the Annunciation she had never related even to her husband. In silence and peace she awaited the fulfilment of the angelic promise. And therefore, when the holy Joseph perceived the accomplishment of the miracle, while he still was ignorant of the Divine cause, "he was minded to put her away privily, for he was not willing to make her a public example¹." He alone knew the holy conditions of their union, and these seemed inconsistent with what he beheld. And even then S. Mary seems never to have attempted to remove his suspicions. Doubtless the story of the visit of S. Gabriel, told by the guileless Maiden, would have satisfied one so single-hearted and so unwilling to give her pain, as he had showed himself. But she waited until it should please God to take away her reproach, content to be, or to suffer all, as became the handmaid of the Lord. Such patient trust animated an illustrious doctor of the Church in a later age of schism and impiety, when he said, "*Laissez faire celui qui fait tout.*" And in due time the angel of the Lord revealed to S. Joseph, in a dream, the secret history of the Incarnation of the Redeemer, and bade him cherish without fear the Virgin so highly favoured of God.

"In those days," says S. Luke, "there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed²," or enrolled, in order to discover the number of the Roman subjects. Every one went

¹ S. Matt. i. 19.

² S. Luke ii. 1.

to be enrolled in his own city. And hence S. Mary and her husband went from Nazareth to Bethlehem, because they were of the house of David. But a deeper cause than the ambition of a Roman emperor made it necessary that the Blessed Mary should travel so far in the depth of winter. The ancient prophecy, that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem, must be fulfilled. It is the prophet Micah who speaks: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting¹." To Bethlehem then came the Mother of that Mighty One Who should be born. "And while she was there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered; and she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." "This day He was made of a woman," says Austin, "and thereby made akin to us; for we were all made of a woman too. Here is unity of nature with us, and the beginning of all our comfort; for now He will not be ashamed to call us brethren²."

Though the Blessed Virgin was now, as bishop Taylor expresses it, "superexalted by an honour greater than the world had yet ever seen," and was in true substance the Mother of God, yet her holy virginity was not the less inviolate. Hear the lan-

¹ Mic. v. 2.

² *Certaine devout, godly, and learned Meditations*, by William Austin, of Lincoln's Inn. He died in 1633.

guage of the Preface in the Office of the Blessed Virgin, as it was formerly said in England: "It is very worthy, just, right, and salutary, that we should always and every where give thanks to Thee, O Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God: and should praise, and bless, and proclaim Thee with joyful minds, in the Nativity of the Blessed and glorious Mary, ever a Virgin, who both conceived Thine only-begotten Son by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; and, the glory of her Virginitv remaining, gave the Eternal Light to this world, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Whom." "And although it may be thought sufficient," says bishop Pearson, "as to the mystery of the Incarnation, that when our Saviour was conceived and born, His Mother was a Virgin; though whatsoever should have followed after, could have had no reflective operation upon the Firstfruit of her womb, though there be no further mention in the Creed than that He was born of the Virgin Mary, yet the peculiar eminency and unparalleled privilege of that Mother, the especial honour and reverence due unto that Son, and ever paid by her, the regard of that Holy Ghost Who came upon her, and the power of the Highest Who overshadowed her, the singular goodness and piety of Joseph, to whom she was espoused, have persuaded the Church of God in all ages to believe that she still continued in the same Virginitv, and therefore is to be acknowledged the Ever-Virgin Mary. As if the gate of the sanctuary in the prophet Ezekiel were to be understood of her: 'This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it;

D d

because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut¹.’ ”

S. Basil remarks, that though the opinion of some heretics, who deny this, does not touch the foundation of our faith, for which it is enough that S. Mary remained a Virgin till the birth of our Lord, yet the ears of the faithful ought not to suffer any one to say that she ever ceased to be so. S. Augustin maintains that this is a point of Apostolic doctrine, following directly from her language to the angel². We may say, with Tillemont, that the Church makes a public profession of it in the Creed, and whenever the name of the Blessed Virgin is uttered; for by no other is she so universally known. Those who denied it have always been placed by the Church among heretics. In the end of the third century, a sect arose, chiefly in Arabia, called Antidicomarianites, or “ Enemies of Mary.” They said that our Blessed Ladye had other sons, after the birth of the Redeemer, who are called in Scripture His brethren. In their general creed they were followers of Eunomius, the denier of our Lord’s divinity, and some of them were the disciples of Apollinaris, who taught that He had not a human soul. At Rome, Helvidius defended their inventions regarding S. Mary, and was refuted by S. Jerom in a masterly treatise, which still remains unanswered by the bold impugnors of her perpetual Virginity. S. Ambrose also, and S. Epiphanius,

¹ Exposition of the Creed, Art. iii. This interpretation of Ezek. xlv. 2. is at least as ancient as S. Ambrose. See the whole of bishop Pearson’s defence of this pious opinion.

² S. Luke i. 34.

have written expressly in its defence, and many other fathers mention it in their works as a belief which could admit of no doubt. To those who at this day are not ashamed to avow the opinion of the "Enemies of Mary," and who delight to represent the Mother of God as encircled with no greater or more mysterious sanctity than any other daughter of Eve, the Church has spoken by an ancient and universal tradition, and by the voice of innumerable teachers. And all others feel the belief in her perpetual Virginity as an instinct, which needs no proof, and is received with the intuitive certainty of a child's faith.

Although the Blessed Virgin had suffered no legal defilement by the birth of the immaculate Lamb of God, yet as it became Him to fulfil all righteousness, so she would not refuse to submit to the Law which He willingly obeyed. She accordingly brought her blessed Child to the temple on the fortieth day after His birth, and presented her burnt-offering and her sin-offering as it was commanded. These were a pair of turtle-doves, for she was too poor to bring a lamb¹. Then the aged Simeon was led by the Spirit into the temple, and gave thanks to God for having permitted him to see His Salvation, even the long-promised Christ. The joy of his heart found utterance in the hymn *Nunc dimittis*, which the Western Church sings at her Complin Office. And while S. Joseph and the Mother of the Lord " marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him, Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His Mo-

¹ S. Luke ii. 24.

ther, Behold this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Anna also, the devout widow, "came in at that instant, and gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

S. Mary then returned, with the Child, to Bethlehem, where the wise men found her. They had been guided from the East by a star, to the place where the Lord was. And when they were come into the house," says S. Matthew, "they saw the young Child with Mary His Mother, and fell down and worshipped Him, and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh¹." Herod the Great had commanded them to return to Jerusalem, and inform him of the retreat of "Him that was born King of the Jews." But God directed them homeward by another way. Herod therefore determined to cut off the mysterious Child Whose title threatened to rival his own, and gave orders that all the children in Bethlehem, from two years old and under, should be slain. But before the command was issued, the angel of the Lord appeared again in a dream to S. Joseph, and enjoined him to "take the young Child and His Mother, and to flee into Egypt." They accordingly escaped by night, and remained in that country till the death of Herod, which happened only a short time after. A prophecy of Hosea was

¹ S. Matt. ii. 11.

thus fulfilled, "I called My Son out of Egypt¹." When Herod was dead, a heavenly messenger directed S. Joseph to return to his own land. Hearing that Archelaus was king in his father's room, he obeyed another Divine warning, and "turned aside into the parts of Galilee," and finally came to Nazareth.

From that time till the Lord was twelve years of age, the sacred history is silent regarding the holy Family. We only know that the Blessed Virgin and her husband went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover². But when He was twelve years old, He went up with them, and "when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and His Mother knew not of it." They thought that He might be in the company, and went a day's journey without Him; but not finding Him then, they returned to Jerusalem seeking Him. At the end of three days "they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." "And when they saw Him they were amazed, and His Mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business? And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His Mother kept all these sayings

¹ Hosea xi. 1.

² S. Luke ii. 41.

in her heart¹.” “This whole transaction,” says the author of the *Harmony of our Lord's Passion*, “seems calculated to train her to a trust and reliance in Him, when He should be out of her sight; and when for three days she should be in vain seeking for Him, sorrowing. And the state of circumstances, in her destitution at His death, is in a striking manner analogous: for at the expiration of that time she will find Him indeed, though not in the condition of the human Son, yet doing His Father's will, about His Father's business, and sitting in His Spiritual temple, and teaching His Church, with all power given Him in His kingdom².”

There is another interval in the history of S. Mary, till the first year of our Lord's public ministry. The holy Gospel then relates that she was present with Him at a marriage in Cana, a town of Galilee. And the first miracle by which He attested His heavenly mission, and prefigured the crowning Mystery of grace, by which He feeds His children with His blessed Body and Blood, was performed at her intercession³. “When they wanted wine, the Mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee⁴? Mine hour is not yet come. His Mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.” She had been surprised to find Him among the doctors, giving utterance to words of divine wisdom, but she had doubtless learnt, in the years which had succeeded, to look for greater things from

¹ S. Luke ii. 48—51. ² P. 338. ³ S. John ii. 1—11.

⁴ Literally, What is it to Me and Thee?—Τί μοι καὶ σοί;

Him. And from what S. John Baptist had said of Him shortly before, that "He must increase," she probably thought that He would no longer remain concealed, and therefore she feared not to ask Him for a miracle. Hence we see her tender compassion for others, and her faith in her Son's infinite power. His reply seems hard, and the Manichean heretics laboured to prove from it that she was not truly His Mother. But she was in very deed the Mother of God, because the Divine and human natures of Christ have, ever since His conception in her womb, been so inseparably united in His one Divine Person, that the Mother of His humanity is the Mother of Christ; and Christ is God. Yet she was not the Mother of His Divinity, through Which alone He could work miracles, for That was begotten of the Father before all worlds. This is why He answered that the hour of showing His love and care for His Mother was not yet come, as S. Augustin remarks. That was reserved for the last moments of His bitter Passion and dereliction. It is a thought of S. Chrysostom, that He may have said this to show that He wished not to work miracles ostentatiously and without great reason; and that He seemed to speak harshly for the instruction of others. For He Who was subject to His Mother during the years of His childhood, and in Whom every grace was infinitely perfect, may not for an instant be supposed to have had even a thought of disrespect towards His earthly Parent. And He seemed to anticipate His hour, says S. Ambrose, that He might refuse nothing to a Mother whom He cherished.

The observations of Tillemont upon this remark-

able event are full of deep thought. "Without examining all that might be said of it, the sweetness and peace with which the holy Virgin received the answer of the Lord Jesus Christ, which could arise only from the depth of humility, seem to oblige us to recognize in her a virtue worthy of the Mother of Him Who is the Author of all virtues. Even if she showed too great haste, as some say, yet it was certainly through ignorance, as we see from the calmness with which she submitted to His will. Full of gentleness and humility, she was not discouraged by this reproof, if such it was; but knowing His charity for men, she said to the servants, 'Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.' And her faith failed not to obtain what her charity had asked. She thus taught us, that the truest way of obtaining the graces of her Son by her intercession, is to do what He commands us in the Gospel, and that we ought not to be discouraged when He seems not to hear our prayers. It is thus that we obtain from Him even those graces whose hour, without this, is not yet come¹."

After this, the Lord went down to Capernaum with His Mother and His brethren, as S. John relates². It is thought that He went thither chiefly for the purpose of providing a fixed home for His Mother; for He Himself is found very soon afterwards at Jerusalem. But S. Epiphanius thinks that she followed Him with the other holy women, who certainly were not more worthy of the high privilege. Yet it may have been otherwise, to teach the ministers of the Church how wholly they ought to be separated from earthly joys and domestic ties.

¹ Tillemont, tom. i. p. 66; et note, p. 465. ² S. John ii. 12.

In the second year of our Lord's ministry, as He was teaching the people in a certain place, "A woman of the company lifted up her voice and said, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked. But He said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it¹." Many ancient writers remark that the Lord would thus teach us, not that His Mother merited no especial honour, nor the name of Blessed in all coming ages, because she had been chosen by the Eternal Word to give birth to Him in time; but that she was still more blessed in having heard, and loved, and observed the Divine Word.

A similar lesson is taught us by the last event in the history of the Blessed Maiden, before the close of the Redeemer's life of trial. It is recorded by three of the Evangelists. "While He talked to the people, behold His Mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him. Then one said unto Him, Behold Thy Mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee. But He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is My Mother, and who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand towards His disciples, and said, Behold My Mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of My Father Which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and Mother²." He was then engaged in a Divine employment, and therefore He declared that He knew neither His Mother nor His brethren, while He was fulfilling the work which He had come on earth

¹ S. Luke xi. 27.

² S. Matth. xii. 46—50.

to do. But He did no wrong to His Blessed Mother, for who was ever so devoted as she to the will of His heavenly Father? And His words are our comfort, as S. Chrysostom writes, for “many women have blessed the holy Virgin, and her womb, and have longed to become such mothers as she. But what hinders them? Behold, He hath appointed you a broad path; and not women only, but men also, may become the Mother of God¹.”

S. Mary was at Jerusalem during the last scenes of the Saviour's earthly course. We know nothing of her history till the hour of noon on the sixth day of that Greater Week, as it is called by the Church, when “there stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother and His Mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene².” The rude soldiers and the crowds of furious Jews could not separate these devoted souls from Him Whom they loved. But it was the hour and the power of darkness, and the soul of the Blessed Virgin was pierced with the sword of grief and of woe unutterable, as Simeon had foretold. What strains are those in which the Latin Church commemorates her sorrows in that hour! “*Stabat Mater dolorosa*.” It is the plaint of the Blessed Maiden; the Sequence in the Mass of the sixth day in Passion-week. Jacoponus de Tuderto, who wrote it, had spent a joyous youth in his native city of Todi, in Umbria, in the society of his wife, a lady of surpassing beauty, and whose heart, amidst the gay scenes of her husband's choice, dwelt in heaven with her Redeemer. She was suddenly taken to His

¹ Catena Aurea, in S. Matt. xii.

² S. John xix. 25.

eternal mercy, and Jacoponus devoted himself, at her tomb, to the religious life; and after years of penance for the remedy of his soul, he ended his days in peace in a convent of the Friars Minor, in the year 1306, on the feast of the Lord's Nativity.

And now the hour was come of which the Saviour had spoken, when He should prove the love and tenderness which bound Him to His Virgin Mother. "When Jesus therefore saw His Mother and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His Mother, Woman, behold thy Son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy Mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home¹." This was the third of those seven last words of our blessed Lord, which He uttered on the Cross, and which have ever been regarded by the Church as containing deep and awful mysteries. While some of them are thought to shadow forth His mediatorial office and His kingly power, and while others express His suffering and His willing sacrifice, these words to His Mother declare Him especially to be the Son of Man. He has also taught us the honour and care which we owe to our parents; for when He was about to leave His Mother desolate, He gave S. John, His beloved and virgin disciple, to be a son to her, and inspired him with filial love towards her. Thus too, in dying, He attested the perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary. For what need of entrusting her to the care of a stranger, if she had a husband and other children, as some are not afraid to say? And ecclesiastical history bears witness to the tender-

¹ S. John xix. 26, 27.

ness with which he cherished her, "into whose keeping, from the Cross, the mighty charge was given."

In the interval between the death and glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus, the faith of His disciples seems to have failed. Even after He was risen, and had appeared to some of them, the others remained doubtful; but there is a universal belief in the Church that the faith of His Blessed Mother, in His Divinity, alone remained unshaken. As the author of the *Mirroure of the Life of Christ* writes, when describing the desolation of His followers on the Sabbath after His death:—"Nevertheless our Ladye stode all day sadly in a restful and peaceful heart, for she had ever active hope of the resurrection of her Son. And therefore holy Church makes especially mind of her [on] Saturday, because in that day stood only in her the faith of our Lord Jesus, that He was God. Nevertheless she might not have full joy, because of the mind of His hard death and His bitter Passion¹."

After the Lord's Resurrection and admirable Ascension, we hear only once more of the Blessed Virgin in Holy Scripture. S. Luke mentions her name among the little company who were waiting at Jerusalem for the Promised of the Father, the Holy Paraclete, and who were present at the election of S. Matthias, in the room of Judas. From that time the history of S. Mary is hidden from view. The Lord gave her no active part in the work of founding His Church, no authority upon earth. As her life began, so it closed, in calm and silence. The unseen might

¹ Chap. 43.

of her prayers, and the example of her humble and holy demeanour, were the only assistance which she could give to the Church. Though we may well believe, as Tillemont says, that it is to her we owe the knowledge of the Conception, and the Birth and Infancy of our Lord. S. Chrysostom indeed thought that these mysteries were made known to the Evangelists directly by the Holy Spirit; but He often makes use of human means, and while S. Mary remained on earth, they were not wanting.

We learn from the early histories of the Church, that the Blessed Virgin went to Ephesus with S. John, and probably with S. Mary Magdalene, and that she died there in extreme old age. She is generally believed to have been buried there; and in a letter written by the third Catholic council at Ephesus, in 431, mention is made of her tomb. An opinion has for many ages prevailed, in the eastern and western Churches, that within a few days after her death her body was miraculously revived, and caught up to heaven; thus only anticipating the blissful consummation for which all saints are waiting. The event is commemorated by every branch of the Church, except the Anglican and her daughters, on the 15th of August. It was once celebrated in Britain with remarkable devotion. It is called by the Greek Church her Sleep, and her Assumption, by the Latin. Without examining at length the evidence on which it rests, we may remark, that the universal belief which it has received for more than a thousand years, in the east and west, may be set against the silence which prevails regarding it among all the Christian fathers before S. Gregory of Tours, in the sixth century.

Andrew of Crete, in the seventh age, was the first doctor of the Greek Church who taught it. It has never been imposed as an article of faith by any decree of the Church, but only claims to be received as a pious opinion, which none may venture to pronounce impossible. And even in the offices in which the Western Church commemorates the event, no historical account is given of the circumstances which attended it. If it cannot be proved by the writings of the fathers, or the tradition of the Church, or by early existing monuments, neither can it be disproved by any of these; and with Tillemont we may say, that God may have willed to preserve from corruption the body of her from whom the Lord Jesus, the Ruler of heaven and earth, derived His own glorious Body. That He was able to do so, who can doubt?

S. Gregory of Tours mentions parts of the dress of the Blessed Virgin, which were preserved as precious relics in his time in one of the churches of France.

S. Gregory, brother of S. Basil, and bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia in the end of the fourth century, relates a vision of S. Mary which was granted to the renowned Gregory Thaumaturgus, or the Wonder-working, on his election to the see of Neocæsarea. He was in great doubt regarding the doctrine which he ought to teach to the people; and as he was musing, he beheld the holy Virgin and S. John approaching him, and at her request the Apostle gave him a short symbol or confession of faith. Gregory wrote it down as he uttered it; and the bishop of Nyssa assures us that the church of Neocæsarea was long preserved by it in the pure faith, amidst surrounding

Arianism. S. Sulpicius Severus, in his *Life of S. Martin*, records many visions of the holy Maiden with which the bishop of Tours was favoured. And once he himself heard him conversing with her, and with S. Agnes and S. Thecla. Tillemont says, that it is impossible to doubt the truth of his narrative, so circumstantially is it related. In later ages such histories are innumerable, though all do not possess credibility in the same high degree. One of the most remarkable instances is the appearance of the Blessed Mary to S. Dominic, in the thirteenth age, when she gave him the scapular of his Order of Preaching Friars. No less marvellous were the circumstances of the conversion of a Jew in Rome, which are familiar to many who visited the capital of the Christian world, in 1842. And their truth rests on the most complete evidence.

The feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary was not known in the age of S. Augustin of Hippo. Yet it had been instituted before the Sacramentary of S. Gregory, which contains a special office for it. It is mentioned by S. Hildefonsus, a Spanish archbishop in the seventh century, and in the old martyrologies and kalendars. It has been observed in England at least since the year 994. In the time of S. Bernard it was universally celebrated throughout Christendom. The Greeks honour it on the same day, the 8th of September. Pope Innocent IV., about the year 1244, added an Octave to it.

“The Church solemnizes three nativities,” as Durandus writes, “of John Baptist, and of the Blessed Mary, and of Christ; since John was the morning-star, because, as it precedes the sun, so he

went before Christ. For he was the first who preached Him openly. Mary was the morning; and the Nativity of Christ, the rising of the sun. For in Him appeared the splendour of the Father. These three nativities designate the three spiritual nativities; we are born again with John in water, with Mary in penitence, and with Christ in glory. But since contrition must go before the nativity of baptism in adults, and also before the nativity of glory, these two have deservedly vigils. But penitence is itself wholly a watching, and therefore it needs not a vigil¹."

S. Proclus, archbishop of Constantinople in the middle of the fifth century, delivered a celebrated sermon on a festival of the Blessed Virgin, but on which of her feast-days is not known.

We have already heard the irreverent language of ancient heretics regarding the holy Mother of God. The extravagancies of the "Enemies of Mary" tempted others to go into the opposite extreme, and to pay her divine worship. The Collyridians were chiefly women in Arabia, and were so called from the name of the cakes which they offered to her. S. Epiphanius condemned them in his writings, and carefully distinguished, as the Catholic Church has ever done, between the high honour and veneration which Christians owe to the Blessed Mother of their Lord God Jesus, and the worship and adoration which are due to Him alone in the Unity of the Eternal Trinity. "He who honours the Lord," says the bishop of Salamis, "honours His Saint also; and he who dishonours the Saint dishonours

¹ Rationale Div. Off. lib. vii. c. 28.

also his Lord. Let Mary then be deemed in herself a holy Virgin and a vessel of sanctity. And it becomes us to think more honourably of her, lest we share the guilt of high-mindedness, and discord, and much speaking¹." And in another place he writes, "Let Mary be had in honour; let the Lord be worshipped²."

The Nestorian heretics, who disturbed the peace of the Church in the beginning of the fifth century, denied that the Divine and human natures of Christ form One indivisible Person, the Second in the most Holy Trinity. They taught that each of these natures is a distinct Person; and therefore denied the right of the Blessed Virgin to her most ancient title of the Mother of God; because, as they said, she is the Mother only of the human Person. Their blasphemies were condemned by the council of Ephesus in 431; and it was declared to be the Faith of the Catholic Church, that in the adorable Person of the Lord Jesus the two natures are so inseparably united, that she who is the Mother of the human nature is truly the Mother of the Divine Person; though not of His Divine nature, which it were an impiety to say. The council thus vindicated the honour of the Lord Jesus in the person of His Blessed Mother; "If any one does not confess that Immanuel is truly God, and by consequence, that the holy Virgin is the Mother of God, because she conceived, according to the flesh, the Word of God made Flesh, let him be anathema."

¹ Adv. Hær. lib. iii. tom. ii. 78.

² Ib. lib. iii. tom. ii. 79.

In the Communion Office of the First Book of king Edward VI. this honourable title is fully expressed in these words ; “ Here we do give unto Thee most high praise, and hearty thanks, for the wonderful grace and virtue, declared in all Thy Saints, from the beginning of the world ; and chiefly in the glorious and most blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Thy Son Jesu Christ, our Lord and God.”

The title of Mother of God was only confirmed by the council of Ephesus, for it had been given to our Ladye long before. Julian the Apostate reproached the Christians, in the middle of the fourth age, with their unceasing mention of her by that august name. Socrates and S. Cyril of Alexandria have proved that it was given by a very primitive tradition. And even Nestorius was compelled to acknowledge the justice of the title, though he would not renounce his errors.

The church in which the council of Ephesus sat was dedicated in honour of the Blessed Mary. And her name soon began to receive greater veneration from the faithful than formerly, as the enemies of the Lord Jesus tried to obscure it. For then the despisers of the holy Mother-Maid were Arians, and an apostate infidel emperor, and heretical teachers, who thought to bring her Divine Son into contempt, and therefore made little of the unparalleled dignity of His Mother. Catholics then, as now, were united in their reverent love to her, for His sake. It is probable that pope Sixtus III. in 432 consecrated the basilica of Liberius at Rome in her honour. And the holy empress Pulcheria about the same time built two churches under her invo-

cation at Constantinople. S. Elias erected one at Jerusalem, in 501, and began another which the emperor Justinian finished.

Our Blessed Ladye, Saint Mary, is generally represented with the Divine Child in her arms, and crowned with a nimbus or circle of glory. All the great Catholic painters have delighted to hallow their exalted genius by pourtraying her in the varying circumstances of her history. And to the pure in heart among them have doubtless often been granted conceptions of a grace and matchless beauty, in their ideal of the holy Mother-Maid, which imaginations of a high order, but less purified and chastened, could never reach. No stronger proof of this is needed than a comparison between the earlier and later compositions of Raphael.

The lily, or fleur-de-lis, is an ancient emblem of the lowliness and spotless purity of the Blessed Virgin. It still adorns the brow of the sovereign of England, on the royal crown, alternately with the image of the Redeemer's cross. The name of Mary is given to the infant daughters of the Catholic Church in the sacrament of regeneration; and it is still even to worldly hearts the most engaging, though the commonest, of names. Churches without number are dedicated to God in her honour, and we are hourly reminded of her in the streets and lanes of old Catholic cities. In Scotland, a curious perversion of the devotion of other times to her remains in the superstitious prejudice against marrying in the month of May. For it was formerly held sacred in Britain to the holy Virgin, as it still is in many countries.

I will not trust myself to describe the ardent

devotion with which so many holy souls now at rest cherished the memory of S. Mary. Neither will I contrast our coldness with the living and burning love of past ages and of other Churches. We have elsewhere contemplated her as the queen of a glorious company of virgins and devoted women, who surmounted the weakness of their condition, and appeared as miracles of grace, to men who knew not the secret charm which allured them onward to deeper and more entire self-forgetfulness, and a closer imitation of her blessed example. Let us then "who still sigh and weep in this valley of tears," unite our voices with the joyful greeting of the Church universal, and say, in the language of holy Scripture, *Ave Maria ! gratiâ plena, Dominus tecum ; Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus Fructus ventris tui, Jesus !* Hail, Mary ! full of grace, the Lord is with thee ; Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, Jesus !

"And forasmuch as is that blyssed greetinge of the angel Gabriel," says an author lately cited, "where-with we honoure and greete our Ladye, every day sounded in the Gospel, therefore I shal telle thee somewhat more here of all methinketh wold stir thy devocion the more in sayinge of that greetynge, *Ave Maria*. This greetinge in manner as holy Church hath ordeyned it to be saide hath five parts, in the which mot be understoode specially the five joyes of our Ladye, and in the five joyes the five virtues that she had sovereignly above all erthely creatures ; which be these, meeknesse, chastite, faith, hope, and charite.

"In the first parte of this greetinge, that standeth in these words, Hail Marye ! thou mayest understonde

the first joye that she had in her annunciation of the gracious conceivinge of Jesu, of the which meekenesse was the grounde, as thou hast heard byfore. And as these wordes, Hail Marie! be the first and the begynnyng of this greetinge, so this feste was the begynnyng and the grounde of all others. And as it was the begynnynge of Mary's joye, and alle mankynde's, so is mekenesse the begynnynge and grounde of all vertues, and therefore in these first wordes skilfully thou mayest understonde the first joye that she had in her annunciation of the conceivynge of her blessed Sone Jesu, and that specially through the vertue of mekenesse.

“In the second part, that standeth in these words, Full of grace, may we understonde the second joye that Mary had in Jesus' nativitie in her joyful berynge, in the which she had sovereynly the virtue of chastite, and of purite; and therefor was she specially full of grace in that she, chaste Maiden and Modere, bare without sorrow, that never did woman but she alonely.

“In the third parte, that is in these wordes, Our Lord is with thee, may we understonde the joye that she had in her Son Jesu His glorious uprisinge, specially by the virtue of stedfast faith and true byleve; for from His dethe, into that tyme, He dwelt alonely with her by stedfast byleve that she had in Him as God, when that alle His Apostles and disciples were departed from Hym by unbyleve and despayre that He was God. And therefor the faith of Holy Church for three daies stode alonely in her. So that in that tyme it might specially be seide to her, Oure Lorde is

with thee ; and after His uprisinge more specially by His bodily presence to her.

“ In the fourthe parte, that is in these words, Blessed be thou in women, or, above alle women, may we understonde the fourth joye that she had in the sight of her Son Jesu myghtily to hevene upflynge, in the whiche sight the hope that she had in His Godhede was fully strengthened and confirmed, seeinge that other women never did, to wit, that part that He toke of her flesh and blood bodily through the myght of the Godhede borne up to hevene, and so hoping withouten drede that she would followe after. Well then myght it be said that time, and nowe may to hir, Blessed be thou sovereignly in women, seeinge thy Son Jesu mightily upflyng to heaven.

“ In the fifth parte, that is, Blessed be the Froyt of thy wombe Jesu, may we understonde the last joye, the joye that she had in her blessed Son Jesu, when He toke her up to blisse with Him, and then worshipfully crowned her queene of hevene everlastingly. Then was her desire to love fulfilled, when she was endlessly, through plenite of charite, knyt to her blessed Son Jesu, and He to her ; and so fedde with a blyssed fruit, that she coveted no more, for she was therethrough filled of goodenesse, blisse, and joye withouten ende.

“ And if thee list in this greetynge specially the five joyes with the five virtues byforesaide, thou mayest say thus in short wordes ; Haille Marye, Maiden mekest, greeted of the aungel Gabriel ; in Jesus’ gracious conceyvinge, full of grace ; Ah ! Moder chaste, without sorrowe or paine, thy Son be ever

blessed ; our Lorde is and was with thee, by true faith at Jesus' glorious uprisinge ; Blessed be thou sovereynly in women, in sad hope seeinge thy Son Jesu to hevene myghtely upflynge ; and blessed be the Froit of thy wombe, Jesu ; in everlastinge blisse through perfect charite the queene of hevene gloriously governyng. Give us these vertues for our spede to thy Sone Jesu, and thy plesynge. Be thou our helpe in all oure neede, and socoure in our last endynge. Amen¹."

Ave Maria ! Mother Blest,
To whom caressing and caressed,
Clings the Eternal Child ;
Favoured beyond Archangel's dream,
When first on thee with tenderest gleam
Thy new-born Saviour smiled :—

Ave Maria ! Thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim,
Yet may we reach thy shrine ;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lowly lofty brows
With love and joy like thine.

Blest is the womb that bare Him—blest
The bosom where His lips were prest,
But rather blest are they
Who hear His word and keep it well,
The living homes where Christ shall dwell,
And never pass away.

Christian Year, p. 317.

¹ *Mirroure of the Life of Christ*, Ch. iii. MS. Adv. Lib. Edin.

SEPTEMBER 14.

Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

335.

THE Exaltation of the Holy Cross is annually celebrated in remembrance of the honour which has ever been paid to it by the faithful, since its discovery in the fourth age. Holy Church also on this day proclaims her gratitude for the watchful care of God in preserving it in Christian hands, amidst many dangers from infidel and sectarian enemies. The pious empress who was guided to its place of concealment, thought no reverence too great for so precious a memorial of the Redeemer's Passion; and, on the spot where His Cross had stood, her son, the emperor Constantine, erected a stately basilica, inclosing also the Sepulchre. It contained two churches; one in honour of the holy Cross, and the other of the Resurrection; and it is named indifferently from either of them. He also built a church on the Mount of Olives, in remembrance of the Lord's admirable Ascension. The site of Calvary and of the holy Sepulchre had been included within the walls of Jerusalem, when the city was rebuilt by the emperor Adrian. On the 13th of September, 335, the new basilica was solemnly consecrated in the presence of the bishops who had assisted at the council of Tyre, and who had gone to Jerusalem by the desire of the emperor. The next day was Sunday, and the holy Cross was exposed from a lofty place in the church to the veneration of the people. This custom was continued for many years afterwards, in

the middle of Lent, and about the time of Easter. The Eastern and Western Churches have celebrated the Exaltation of the holy Cross on the 14th of September, ever since the year 335. The festival was instituted by the emperor, and hence it is less honoured in the Latin Church than the feast of the Invention, which was appointed by the highest ecclesiastical authority, as Durandus remarks.

S. Helena had sent a portion of the holy Cross to Constantinople, and had carried another part with her to Rome, in 326; the rest was laid up in the basilica of the Resurrection at Jerusalem, and there it remained for nearly three centuries, till, in the year 614, the Persians, under their king Chosroes, crossed the Jordan, and made themselves masters of Palestine. They treated the Christians with great cruelty, burning their churches, and killing many clerks, monks, and religious women. They carried away the sacred vessels from Jerusalem, and the more precious wood of the holy Cross. The patriarch Zacharias also was made prisoner, with a great multitude of people. Many of them were afterwards sold to the Jews, who thirsted for their lives. It is said that more than 90,000 persons perished at that time. Two of the sacred relics were rescued by Nicetas, a patrician; the sponge, and the sacred lance with which the Redeemer's side was pierced. The sponge was sent to Constantinople, and was shown to the people on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross in that year. The lance arrived there in the following month, and was publicly venerated.

Meanwhile the war with the Persians went on with various success. Heraclius, the Roman em-

peror, made many proposals of peace, but could obtain no terms without first consenting to renounce the Crucified and to adore the sun. Thus the war may be said to have been in a manner sacred. About the year 623, Heraclius began to have a decided advantage over Chosroes; and finally, in 627, he defeated him in a great battle, and pursued him into Persia. Sarbazara, his general, deserted his cause, and assisted the emperor. Chosroes at length fell sick, and fearing that his end drew near, he appointed his favourite son as his successor. But Siroes, his eldest son, openly revolted, and proclaimed himself king. He thrust his father into a dark unwholesome dungeon, and loaded him with chains; and after inflicting every torture and indignity that he could devise, he condemned him to be shot at by archers, and thus to perish by a lingering death. Before he expired, he had seen all his children massacred before his eyes.

In February, 628, Siroes made peace with the Romans, and restored the prisoners, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and the holy Cross. It had been preserved in a temple where the statue of Chosroes was worshipped as a god. We may learn how highly the faithful venerated the sacred wood, from the name of "the Christians' God," by which it was known among the Persians. It was carried first to Constantinople, and in 629, in the beginning of spring, Heraclius translated it to Jerusalem, and restored it to its former place of honour. He accompanied it himself, in token of his gratitude to God for his success. It is related, that as he approached the city, bearing it in his arms, he suddenly came to

a stand, and could advance no further. Zacharias, who was with him, remarked that his royal apparel and state ill accorded with the humble guise of Him who had once borne the Cross along the way of sorrow. The emperor immediately laid aside his imperial garments, and entered Jerusalem barefoot, and meanly clad. The precious wood was still enclosed in its original case. The unbroken seals were recognized by the clergy, who opened them, and showed it to the people. From that time the feast of its Exaltation was kept in the East with greater devotion. On this day the Latin Church celebrates its recovery from the infidel Persians; but in the East the earlier institution of the festival is more regarded, and particular commemoration is made of the apparition of the Cross to the Emperor Constantine, which we shall presently hear of.

In 635, Heraclius retreated before the conquering army of the Mahommedan generals, and carried the holy Cross with him to Constantinople, foreseeing that Jerusalem would shortly be taken. It is probable that a small portion was left behind, for immediately after the holy city was retaken by the Crusaders in 1089, we read of their advancing to meet the sultan of Egypt with a "portion of the Cross, which a certain Syrian, a citizen of Jerusalem, had concealed in his house, and which had been handed down from father to son, and by a happy and loyal device had been kept secret from the Turks during the whole time¹."

Many changes befel this fragment of the Cross

¹ Gulielm. Malmes. *De gest. Reg. Angl.* lib. iv.

during the succeeding years. Sometimes it went before the Christian army to victory, and at other times, like the ark of God in ancient days, it fell into the hands of the infidels. It seems finally to have been carried to a place of safety by the Knights of the Temple. The prayers of Christian people were frequently asked for its recovery, and even so lately as the year 1509 we find these words in the form of bidding the bedes, in the Manual of York:—“We shall make specyall prayer . . . for the holy Crosse that God was done upon, that God for His merci bringe it out of the hethen mennes handes into Cristen mennes kepynge.” But this form was probably copied out of older books.

A part of the holy Cross was sent from the East to Paris by Ansellus, a canon of that church, in the year 1109. Its arrival is annually commemorated in Paris on the first Sunday in August, which is called the feast of the Susception of the holy Cross.

In the year 1239, Baldwin, Emperor of Constantinople, sent a large portion of the Cross, the point of the lance, and the crown of thorns, to S. Louis, king of France. He feared that they would be no longer safe in his keeping, as the Sarazins were gaining ground in the East. And S. Louis had redeemed them at a large price. They were brought by the way of Venice, and thence were carried with great solemnity into France. The holy king went out to meet them as they approached, and bore them with much devotion to the church of S. Stephen, at Sens; where they were deposited till he had built a chapel in the royal palace to receive them. It was consecrated by the legate of the Holy See in the presence

of many bishops and the flower of the French nobility. The king himself carried the precious relics into Paris, attired in poor apparel, and walking barefoot.

When the storm of the Revolution, in the end of the last century, had burst, this holy chapel was profaned. But the sacred Cross had been carried away by pious hands, and when more peaceful times returned, it was restored. Another portion of the wood of the Cross is preserved in Paris. It is called the Palatine Cross, from the Princess Palatine, Anna Gonzaga, who bequeathed it to the monks of S. Germain. It had been originally sent into Poland by one of the Greek emperors, and John Casimir, king of Poland, had given it to the lady Anna, in the seventeenth century. She declared that she and many others had seen it remain unhurt amidst the flames. These and other relics which had escaped the sacrilegious fury of the people, were proved by the severest tests, and were then honourably placed in the treasury of the metropolitan church. They are exposed on certain days to the veneration of the faithful.

In Rome also there is a large fragment of the holy Cross. The Sultan Bajazet sent the sacred lance, without the point, to Pope Innocent VIII., in 1492. The title, and sponge, and part of the pillar at which our Lord was scourged, are believed to be in Rome at this day. Many other churches, as those of Milan and Poitiers, possess smaller pieces of the precious wood.

On this day, as I have said, the Eastern Church commemorates the appearance of a luminous cross

surmount the imperial diadem. Well attested instances of the appearance of the Cross in later ages, are not wanting. I can only allude to the remarkable confirmation which was thus granted to the holy discourse of a Minorite friar, in a town of Castile, on the 18th of March, 1414. It was well known over the whole of Spain, and more than a hundred persons who witnessed it were converted to the Christian faith¹. It is an ancient belief in the Church, that once again the standard of the Cross will be seen in the heavens, going before the Judge of the quick and dead, to the awful doom. This opinion rests on His own words, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory²."

Those who have loved to trace in the old Law the shadow of better things to come, have discovered in the ancient Scriptures no indirect allusions to the holy Cross. Thus when the aged patriarch Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph³, he laid his hands on them, "prefiguring the mystery of the Cross," as Ven. Bede remarks. It is observed by the same great doctor, that the wood which Moses cast into the bitter waters of Marah⁴ is to us "the sacrament of the Cross of Christ." And in the serpent of brass which Moses set upon a pole for the cure of the Israelites, our blessed Lord Himself has taught us to behold the

¹ Wadding Ann. Min. ix. p. 365.

² S. Matt. xxiv. 30.

³ Gen. xlviii. 13, 14.

⁴ Exod. xv. 25.

type of the Son of Man lifted up¹. The very figure of the Cross is contained in the mystic *tau*—T,—with which the prophet Ezekiel saw the messenger of God mark the foreheads of those who bewailed the desolation of the holy place, and who were spared in the destruction which followed². In the vision of the prophet is wonderfully prefigured the sealing of the servants of God, which the Divine John beheld in the Apocalypse³. What seal but the Cross of Christ is marked upon the foreheads of the faithful? Other sign there is none which will have power to stay the sword of the angel of wrath, in the dreadful Judgment.

The figure of the holy Cross was thought in earlier days to teach deep mysteries of faith. Thus S. Augustin writes; “This joy is signified by the breadth of the transverse wood, where the hands are fixed. By the hands, we understand works; by the breadth, the joy of the worker, for grief maketh narrow. By the height, where the head is, the expectation of reward from the sublime justice of God, Who will render to every one according to his works. So the length, by which the whole body is stretched, signifies endurance, whence they are called long-suffering who endure. The depth, which is fixed in the earth, prefigures the secret of the Sacrament. For you remark the words of S. Paul⁴; ‘That ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge⁵.’”

¹ S. John iii. 14.² Ezek. ix. 4.³ Rev. vii. 3.⁴ Eph. iii. 17, 18.⁵ Epist. lv.

Durandus teaches us the same lesson when he says, "The depth signifies faith, which is the foundation; the height, hope, which rests in heaven; the breadth, charity, which extends to the left, even to enemies; and the length, perseverance, which knows no end¹."

I know not how to speak of the deep veneration with which the Catholic Church has ever regarded the precious wood of the Cross. It is proclaimed by her liturgies, her festivals, and the holy words and deeds of her most devoted children. They believed it to be inseparable from the adoration which a redeemed world owes to the Author of its ransom. Far removed indeed, as heaven from earth, was the worship which they offered to Him, from the reverence which they paid to His Cross. But their grateful love refused to be confined within the narrow limits which the cold judgment of a modern age would prescribe. It embraced every thing that had approached Him, the earth which He had trod, and the instruments of His death. And it would ill become us to blame them, till we can form some conception, even the faintest, of the unutterable devotion of their inmost souls to their Lord Jesus. Their reverence for the Cross exceeded our worship of the Crucified. That it was therefore too great, is not the only conclusion that may follow. May not our poor and constrained devotion give token of hearts too much at home on earth to measure the love of seraphic spirits? Could we only descend from the seats of partial judges to the more becoming attitude

¹ Rationale Div. Off. lib. v. c. ii. 16.

of tearful suppliants, we should cease to magnify ideal dangers, which exist only in our own limited conceptions. Men whose conversation was wholly in heaven, even before their souls were dismissed to its fruition by a blessed death, were in little peril of paying an idolatrous reverence to the holiest things below. But for their love to Him Who engaged their every thought, their veneration for the memorials of His goodness would have had no place. And the same love was their security against undue regard to these. But even if this charge of idolatry were less unfounded than it is, we at least are not in a condition to bring it, till we have shown that there is less danger in the proud and disdainful indifference to every token of the world unseen, which threatens to destroy the faith of an age without love; and which has already in many parts of the world exalted unbelief above the confiding simplicity of holier times.

The wood of the Cross can never be separated from the memory of the victory which was achieved by it. Thus the Preface in the Sacramentary of S. Gregory has these words;—"Through Christ our Lord, Who by the Passion of the Cross redeemed the world, and sweetened the most bitter taste of the ancient tree by the medicine of the Cross; and the death which had come through the forbidden tree He conquered by the trophy of the wood; that in the wonderful dispensation of His mercy, we who had wandered from the flower-bearing home might, through the wood of the Cross, return to the joys of paradise. Through Whom."

From the holy Cross which bore the Redeemer in His Passion, it was easy for reverent minds to pass,

with devout regard, to its image. The crucifix was to them a source of pure devotion in life, and of comfort in death. Not to multiply examples, with which all holy history abounds; when S. Louis lay on the bed of death, he caused a crucifix to be placed near his couch, and as he grew worse, he would often gaze upon it, and turn towards it with clasped hands. And every morning it was brought to him, before he tasted food, and he kissed it, and embraced it, with great reverence and devotion. It was thus that Mary, Queen of Scotland, nerved her soul for the last act of her lingering martyrdom. "At this moment," says Tytler, "the Earl of Kent, observing her intensely regarding the crucifix, bade her renounce such antiquated superstitions; 'Madam,' said he, 'that image of Christ serves to little purpose, if you have Him not engraved upon your heart.'—'Ah!' said Mary, 'there is nothing more becoming a dying Christian than to carry in his hands this remembrance of his redemption. How impossible is it to have such an object in our hands, and keep the heart unmoved¹.'" Witness the deep significance with which the Western Church invites the faithful on Good Friday to venerate it on bended knee. For a few moments the mournful tone of her offices on that day of grief is interrupted by the anthems of triumph;—*Pange lingua gloriosi lauream certaminis*, and *Vexilla Regis prodeunt*. This ceremony was anciently called "Creeping to the Cross." It is worthy of notice that it was abolished by K. Henry VIII., after he had assumed supreme authority in

¹ Hist. of Scotland, vol. viii. p. 403.

the Anglican Church. No less remarkable is the remonstrance which Cranmer offered. "For if the honouring of the cross," these are his words, "as creeping and kneeling thereto, be taken away, it shall seem to many that be ignorant, that the honour of Christ is taken away, unless some good teaching be set forth withal, to instruct them therein¹."

The wars of the Cross, which fill the pages of European history in the middle ages, are another example of the dignity with which the ancient Church invested this blessed sign. Through strange and inhospitable countries, and in the bloody field, they bore aloft the standard of the Cross, in the glorious cause of rescuing from the hands of the infidels the city which their dear Lord had hallowed by His death. The two great military orders of the Hospital and the Temple wore its sign on their garments. And the memory of their devotion to it will be preserved while the world lasts, in their familiar name.

Above the screen which separated the nave from the choir, or chancel, in ancient churches, stood the image of the Cross, and on either side of it were the figures of S. Mary and S. John, recalling the scene of the Lord's most tearful Passion. Besides the exaltation of the sacred ensign, it signified that from the militant church to the triumphant we can only pass by the merits of Christ's suffering on the Cross. To the faithful eye it also prefigured the Tree of Life, which S. John beheld in vision in the midst of the city of God. It was commonly called the Roode or Rude, from the Anglo-Saxon word *Rod*, which

¹ Collier, Eccl. Hist. Part ii. B. iii. 204.

means an image. The screen, or Roodloft, which supported it, was generally of stone in cathedral and abbey churches, and of richly carved wood in smaller buildings. The epistle and holy gospel at Mass were sung from it, as well as many other parts of the sacred offices. And hence it is frequently called the *Jube*, from the first word of the sentence, *Jube domne benedicere*, Sir, command a blessing, with which the chaunter or reader sought the benediction of the chief minister. The Rood itself was usually floriated, and ornamented with sacred devices, as the emblems of the four evangelists. "It is worthy of remark," says Mr. Pugin, "that the ancient crosses were all richly decorated, in order to set forth that the very instrument on which our Redeemer suffered an ignominious death had become the emblem of His glorious victory over sin and its punishment, and should therefore be ornamented as the figure of this great triumph and our redemption. The old mystical school of Christian painters invariably figure our Lord with extended arms on the Cross, not through ignorance of drawing, but to represent the Son of God embracing the sins of the whole world¹."

These lines were often inscribed underneath the rood :—

*"Effigiem Christi, dum transis, semper honora,
Non tamen effigiem, sed quem designat adora;
Nam Deus est quod imago docet, sed non Deus ipsa:
Hanc videas, et mente colas quod cernis in illâ²."*

"The effigy of Christ, when thou passest under,

¹ Essay on the present state of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England, p. 27.

² Weever's Funeral Monuments, p. 117.

ever honour; but yet not the effigy, but Whom it represents, adore; for what the image teaches is God, but itself is not God. Look then upon it, and in thy mind worship what thou seest in it."

The antiquity of roods is very great. Every church in England formerly possessed one. They were also common in the continental churches till the Revolution in the end of the last century. In England the work of destruction was begun by K. Henry VIII., and was continued in his son's reign; but Q. Mary's accession put a stop to it for a time. At her death the ancient roods were every where destroyed with savage violence. We read of "a sermon preached, November 4, 1559, at S. Botolph, Bishops-gate, at the wedding of a priest to a priest's widow of Ware, by one West, a new doctor, who took occasion to speak freely and earnestly against the Rood-lofts¹."

The very form of a Catholic Church often represents the Cross of Christ: the chancel, or eastern part, is the head, the transepts form the arms, and the body of the cross is the nave; and the high altar, whence the Sacrifice ascends, represents the heart. So closely was the Redeemer's Cross sometimes imitated in old churches, that a second transept was added, as at York, Salisbury, and many other places, to signify the writing which Pilate affixed to it; and the remarkable inclination towards one side, which was often given to the principal altar, is believed to shadow forth the drooping of the adorable head of the Lamb of God in death.

¹ Strype's Annals, vol. i. p. 136.

But the time would fail me to describe the numerous ways in which the Catholic Church honours and exalts the Cross of Christ; for the ingenuity of love is without limits. In the sublime words of S. Paul, she ceases not to exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world¹." It is borne at the head of her solemn processions, it crowns her holy buildings, and in her cemeteries it calls on the living to be mindful of the faithful dead. It is found by the wayside, and on the doors of houses, and in most Christian countries it overshadows the royal crown. It is the mark prefixed to the name of a bishop, and its figure is every where used in the signature of the unlettered. In the coat-armour of a hundred honourable houses it tells of fame earned long centuries ago by knightly ancestors in the Holy Land. It is blazoned on the British union-flag, and floats gloriously over our navies.

And if we enter more deeply into its mystery, and pass from its sign to what it represents, we shall find tokens no less convincing that it is indeed the sceptre of Christ supremely governing all faithful hearts. For it is the exaltation of His Cross which makes tribulation the way to glory, and teaches the children of the kingdom to welcome suffering as a gift of inestimable price. It endears to them the poor and the friendless, "those who have most need and least help," as images of Him Who became poor for their sakes, and Who still suffers in the meanest of His

¹ Gal. vi. 14.

little ones. It is the glory of His Cross which transforms into palaces of Christ the hospitals where His pain-stricken members are lying. Beneath its radiance the unwearied tenderness of the sister of charity becomes the visible ministry of an angel of mercy. And thus, not without deep meaning, is an hospital sometimes called, as in Paris, *Hôtel Dieu*. For, except on His altar-throne, in Presence Real, where, in this sad distracted world, is the Divine Saviour found by the loving heart so near as in the house of poverty and woe? Thither many a grateful penitent repairs to wash His feet with tears. Again, what lure but the exalted Cross fascinates the eye of the devoted missionary, leading him onwards over sea and land, "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness?" Let the blessed martyrs of Christ in Cochin China attest the love of the Christian missionary for the all-conquering Cross. Only a few years ago, they went joyfully to torture and a lingering death rather than tread upon its figure, which the heathen had laid in the public street, as a test of the faith of every one who entered the gates of the town.

"But here I make an end," in the words of Bona, "when I shall first have humbly saluted the Cross. Hail! blessed Cross, more splendid than the stars, more beautiful than the moon, more glorious than the sun, which art adorned with the Body of the Saviour as with glittering gems, and art purpled with the precious blood of God. Thou stretchest out thine arms above the stars of heaven. Hail! chosen wood, germinating life, fructifying joy, distilling the oil of

gladness, dropping the balsam of spiritual delights !
 Thou art the salvation of a lost world, the haven of
 those in danger, the rule of justice, the teacher of
 manners, the strength of combatants, the glory of
 conquerors, the reward, and the crown. O amiable
 and beloved Cross ! save us all who are fortified with
 thy tremendous ensign ; that He Who was pleased
 to use thee as the primary instrument of our redemp-
 tion, may also carry us, sanctified through thee, to
 share His glory ; that, at last, this our penitence
 being blissfully consummated in the Cross, through
 the ignominy of His Passion, we may be brought to
 the glory of His Resurrection¹." Amen.

Is this the standard of a king ?

It is the Cross, that sign of mystery ;
 The wood on which, like some accursed thing,
 The world's great Maker deign'd to die ;
 Where He sustain'd the lance's iron wound,
 Whence for our souls water and blood abound.

Blessed and blessed-making tree,
 From what most noble stock didst thou arise,
 That thou should'st touch those limbs, the bearer be
 Of Him, the mighty Sacrifice,
 Who, drop by drop, the world's price told that day,
 And rescued from hell's jaws the living prey.

Hail ! holy Cross ! sole refuge, hail !
 Blessed memorial of our suffering Lord ;
 In our grief's bitter waters so prevail,
 That they to us may health afford :
 So may devotion gain a holier mind,
 And penitence therein may pardon find.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 124.

¹ *Divina Psalmodia*, c. xvi. 5.

SEPTEMBER 17.

S. Lambert, Bishop and Martyr.

709.

S. LAMBERT, or Landebert, was the son of rich and noble parents in the city of Maestricht. His family had professed the Christian faith for many generations. His father carefully instructed him in sacred learning, and recommended him to S. Theodard, bishop of Maestricht, to finish his studies. The holy prelate valued his scholar so highly, that he would gladly have consecrated him as his successor in the see, if the canons had allowed him. In 668, as S. Theodard was on his way to the court of Childeric II. King of Lorraine, to demand justice against certain noblemen who had plundered his church, he was waylaid and murdered by them. S. Lambert was chosen to succeed him, with the approval of Childeric and his whole court.

Childeric was the second son of Clovis II. and S. Bathilda. Clotaire III. his elder brother became king of France, while he succeeded to the sovereignty of Lorraine. On the death of Clotaire in 669, his younger brother, Theodoric III., filled the throne for a time. But Ebroin his minister, or Maire du palais, as he was called, made himself so odious to the people, that they deposed him, and forced both their sovereign and his minister into a monastery, as a condition of escaping the punishment of death. Childeric thus found himself sole monarch. But he did

not profit by the fate of his brother, and was in his turn dethroned and murdered in 673, with his queen and his son, by some of his nobles, who were enraged by his cruelty and debauchery. Theodoric and his Maire du Palais then resumed the government of Neustria and Burgundy; while the throne of Lorraine was filled by Dagobert, the son of Sigebert II. S. Lambert was driven into exile as a favourite of K. Childeric, and his see was filled by another. He retired with two of his servants into the monastery of Stavallo, where he spent the seven following years in strict observance of the monastic rule. An instance of his obedience is recorded. As he was rising, one night in winter, to his private devotions, he happened to let fall his wooden sandal or slipper with a loud noise. The abbat, thinking that some one had broken the rule of silence, sent an order that the brother who had made the noise should go and pray before the cross, which stood in the open air, near the door of the church. Without making any answer, S. Lambert laid down the upper garment which he was in the act of putting on, and went out as he was, barefoot and hardly covered, and remained kneeling before the cross for three or four hours. While the monks were warming themselves after matins, the abbat inquired who was absent. They replied that the brother whom he had sent to the cross had not returned. He immediately sent for him, and when he discovered that he was the holy bishop, he threw himself at his feet with the community, and asked his pardon. S. Lambert, who was covered with snow, and almost frozen with cold, could only answer, God forgive you for thinking you

stand in need of pardon for what you have done. As for myself, is it not in cold and nakedness, that, like S. Paul, I am to tame my flesh, and to serve God ?

In 677 Dagobert was murdered by his nobles, and Theodoric became sole king of France. By the advice of Ebroin, he exercised a most despotic power, and persecuted S. Lambert and other prelates without ceasing. But the divine vengeance overtook his wicked minister. He was assassinated by a nobleman whom he had offended ; and Pepin of Herstal succeeded him in the office of Maire du Palais. The new minister set himself to repair the injuries which his predecessor had inflicted. The clergy were rejoiced to see S. Lambert and the other banished prelates restored to their sees. The saint returned with new ardour to the exercise of his holy functions. He devoted himself to the conversion of the pagans whom he found in Toxandria, a province of Brabant ; winning them to the true faith by his patient zeal, regenerating them in baptism, and destroying many of their temples and idols. He frequently visited S. Willibrord, the Apostle of Friesland, and the predecessor and companion of S. Boniface.

S. Lambert had offended Pepin, the lord of Herstal, by boldly denouncing his immoral life. Two of his retainers also had set the law at defiance, and had plundered the church of Maestricht. The relations of S. Lambert were so provoked by their outrages, that, without his knowledge, they attacked the spoilers and put them to death. Dodo, a powerful officer of Pepin, was related to them, and vowed

vengeance against the innocent bishop. He assembled a body of armed men, and marched to Leodium on the Meuse, then a small village, on the site of the present city of Liege. S. Lambert was resting after matins, when they arrived. As they were forcing their way into his house, his servants ran to awake him. His first act was to seize a sword, but he instantly threw it away, and forbade his nephews to fight in his defence, saying to them, If you love me truly, love Jesus Christ, and confess your sins to Him. As for me, it is time that I go to live with Him. He also reminded them that they were guilty of murder, and deserved punishment. Then sending every one out of the chamber, he threw himself on the ground, and stretched out his arms in the form of a cross. Thus he lay waiting for his enemies, who soon rushed in, and slew the holy bishop with a lance, and put his nephews and all his domestics to the sword. This unjust death endured with such patience and meekness, joined with the eminent sanctity of his life, has been regarded by the Church as a lower degree of martyrdom. It happened on the 17th of September 709, or in 708, according to Fleury.

His body was sent in a boat to Maestricht, and was buried in the church of S. Peter. The house where he had met his death became the scene of frequent miracles ; and the faithful built a church on the spot. And thither S. Hubert, his successor in the see of Maestricht, translated his remains, in 721, with great pomp and solemnity. The see also was removed to the church where his body rests, and

thus the village of Liege became a city. The bishopric of Maestricht had originally been removed from Tongres.

Happy he that passeth
Through this world of pain,
With a soul that glasseth,
Free from earthly stain,
Love of God—for ever in his heart to reign.

Happy he, when sadness,
Chance, and change are o'er,
And Earth's sighing and gladness
Wrings the heart no more,
Who shall see where Love lights up the eternal shore.
Baptistery, p. 251.

SEPTEMBER 26.

S. Cyprian, Archbishop and Martyr.

258.

THASCIUS CYPRIAN, "the most sweet doctor, and blessed martyr," as S. Augustin has called him, was originally a pagan. His family was of senatorial rank in the city of Carthage, where he was born. He was for many years a distinguished teacher of rhetoric, and enjoyed great fame for eloquence. When he was verging on old age, it pleased God to turn his heart. A priest named Cæcilius prepared him for baptism, and at his second birth in its cleansing laver he prefixed the name of his spiritual father to his own. And Cæcilius, in his last sickness, commended his wife and children to the care of Cyprian.

The feelings of the neophyte regarding the grace of that holy sacrament are recorded in a letter which he wrote to his friend Donatus, soon after his baptism. "While I lay in darkness and blind night," he says, "and while on the sea of a tossing world I was hurried along upon erratic courses, wavering and changeful, I was ignorant of my life, and a stranger to light and truth. And I deemed it difficult and hard that any one, out of those manners, should be born again, which was promised, for my salvation, by the divine indulgence; and that being animated to a new life in the laver of the health-giving water, he should lay aside what he was before; so that, the fetters of the body remaining, he should become a changed man in heart and mind. . . . But after the impurity of my former life was washed away, by the help of the water of my birth, into my hallowed and cleansed heart the light from above poured; and when I had drunk in the heavenly Spirit, a second birth restored me a new man. Immediately, in a wonderful manner, doubtful things were made certain, what had been closed was opened, dark became light, power was given where formerly was difficulty. So that I could recognise it to have been of the earth that I had long lived in the flesh, and defiled by sin; and it began to be of God that now the Holy Spirit animated me¹."

His heathen friends reproached him with weakness when they saw his change, and heaped abuse and ridicule upon him. But, as if he had resolved to become yet more vile for Christ's sake, he sold all

¹ Ep. ii. ad Donat.

his lands, and divided his great wealth among the poor ; and devoted himself to perpetual continence. He studied Holy Scripture deeply, and particularly the character of those whom God has specially praised, that he might make them the model of his own. Of all the ecclesiastical writers, Tertullian was his favourite, and he used to call him his master. He had not been long in the Church, before he was advanced to the priesthood. The rule of S. Paul was less strictly enforced, owing to his singular merit. Donatus, bishop of Carthage, dying soon after, he was elected to succeed him, by the voice of all the clergy except five. But he thought himself unworthy of the honour, and hid himself in his own house to avoid their importunity. The people guarded all the approaches to prevent his escape ; and in the end he was persuaded to accept the dignity, in 248.

His government was marked by justice and vigour, tempered with great piety and charity. Such was the sanctity which beamed from his countenance, that no one could behold him without regard. His gravity was mingled with gaiety, but it was neither a gloomy severity, nor an excessive complaisance ; so that one hardly knew which was rather due to him, love or veneration. This is the picture which Pontius, his deacon and familiar attendant, has given of him. He made a resolution to do nothing without the advice of his clergy and the approbation of the people. He had a tender regard for the poor of his flock.

In 249, Decius became emperor, and published sanguinary laws against the Christians. This was the beginning of the seventh general persecution. In the amphitheatre and the circus at Carthage, the

pagans loudly demanded that Cyprian should be thrown to the lions. He therefore deemed it prudent to withdraw for a time, in compliance with the command which our blessed Lord had given. For he alone was then sought for, and he hoped that the peace of his Church might be secured by his retreat, while his presence only inflamed the minds of its enemies. He was immediately proscribed, and his goods were confiscated. But he continued to assist his flock by his instructions, and the might of his prayers. He wrote many letters to his clergy, urging them to preserve discipline, and to see that the confessors in prison, and the poor, and strangers, and widows, were provided with what they needed. He recommended that the faithful should not go in crowds to visit the confessors, for fear of provoking the heathen. We learn from his letters that the holy Sacrifice was frequently offered in the prisons for their comfort. He also encouraged them to persevere, by setting before them the hope of eternal joys. And out of what the Church contributed for his maintenance, he sent a sum of money for their relief.

S. Fabian, Bishop of Rome, received the reward of martyrdom in 250 : and the clergy, who governed the Church for some months during the vacancy of the see, wrote to inform S. Cyprian of the happy end of their father. He replied in a letter full of encouragement. They also wrote to the clergy of Carthage, exhorting them to steadfastness, and to treat with gentleness those who had failed in the day of trial, but who, if their courage were renewed by compassionate brethren, might yet follow Christ to

death. They particularly insisted that the bodies of the martyrs should be always reverently buried.

The persecution in Carthage increased in severity. Many of the confessors passed to their crowns, to whom S. Cyprian wrote from his hiding place, on the eve of their passion. He called upon his clergy to join to their prayers fasting and tears, and every act of submission, that they might obtain from God the restoration of peaceful times. For he said that their sins had brought that tempest upon them. He desired that those who died in prison should be regarded as blessed martyrs, even although their bodies had not suffered torture. Tertullus, a brother, informed him of the days when each of them was received into immortality, and in his exile he offered the adorable Sacrifice in memory of them.

Towards the end of the year 250, the fury of the persecution abated in Carthage, though it still raged elsewhere. S. Cyprian was much perplexed with doubts regarding those who had fallen away through weakness. Many of his flock, and even some of the clergy, were in this miserable condition. It was then a common custom for great offenders, who were undergoing the canonical penance due to their sin, to receive from the martyrs and holy confessors letters or billets of recommendation, in virtue of which the bishops granted them an indulgence, or remission of the remaining penance, and restored them to the communion of the Church. At first this was done only in particular cases, where the interference of the confessors had been merited by special circumstances. But in the time of S. Cyprian it had grown so common, and had been so much abused, that discipline was

at an end. For priests took upon them to grant indulgences, and the offenders themselves often made a gain by selling the billets of the martyrs to others. To put a stop to this dangerous licence, S. Cyprian wrote to the confessors, and entreated them not to grant those letters without great consideration, and a special inquiry into the circumstances of each case. He sharply rebuked his clergy for their neglect of canonical discipline. And to the lapsed he held out hopes of reconciliation, but desired them not to expect it easily, or without regard to the law of the Church ; and that they should wait till he could return to Carthage, when in a council of bishops and confessors he would examine those billets of recommendation, and would restore them to communion. But if any were sick and in extremity, he granted leave to his priests to hear their confession, and to receive them back by imposition of hands. And in case no priests were near, and if the necessity were urgent, he allowed a deacon to reconcile them, and even to give them sacramental absolution. The strict rule of S. Cyprian was approved by the Roman clergy, and by the confessors, to whom he had written in defence of his retreat, which they had looked upon with suspicion. They formally confirmed his decision regarding the penitent apostates, and promulgated their decree throughout all the Churches. Lapsed clerks were admitted only into lay communion.

There was a priest in Carthage, named Novatus, who had been convicted of many grave offences. Fearing ecclesiastical punishment, he separated himself, in the year 251, from the Church, and ordained as his deacon, Felicissimus, one of the five clerks who

had opposed the election of S. Cyprian. He too was guilty of serious crimes. They retired to a mountain, where they celebrated their worship, in company with the rest of the clergy who had taken part against the holy bishop. Cyprian excommunicated them, and cautioned the people against their error.

In the same year, Cornelius was chosen Bishop of Rome. Novatian, a priest in his diocese, protested, and made a schism. He prevailed on three bishops from the country to come to Rome and consecrate him as the successor of S. Fabian. He affected a great regard for canonical discipline, and made its violation a chief cause of complaint against his bishop. In the end his extreme doctrine became heresy; for he taught that none who have soiled their baptismal robe with the stain of mortal sin can be restored by penance to the communion of the Church. His followers were called from him Novatians. In him we behold another of those presumptuous assailants of holy Church, who wasted their fury upon the eternal rock on which she stands, but their names now serve only as beacons to warn others from a course so perilous. "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder¹."

S. Cyprian returned to Carthage in 251, and celebrated the festival of Easter among his flock. Soon afterwards he held a council to consider the affairs of his Church. Deputies were sent to Rome to examine the circumstances of the schism of Novatian, that the African Church might know with whom to hold com-

¹ S. Matt. xxi. 44.

munion. But when the council heard that he had been ordained bishop after the consecration of Cornelius, they refused to communicate with his emissaries at Carthage. For they considered so flagrant a breach of Catholic unity to be a sufficient condemnation of his cause. And the report which their deputies brought from Rome so confirmed their decision, that they would not listen to the defence of Novatian which his friends offered. The conduct of the bishops towards the lapsed was also regulated in this council. Its canons were sent to Rome, and to other Churches. A synod at Rome in the same year approved of the decrees of Carthage, and condemned the schism of Novatian. Many of the confessors, who had been tempted to join it, returned to the Church, and made a public confession of their error.

S. Cyprian congratulated the holy Bishop of Rome on their reconciliation. He also sent them treatises *On the Unity of the Church*, and *On the Lapsed*. In the first, he demonstrates that the Church is one, and that to S. Peter the apostleship was first given as a symbol of unity. After citing the words of our Lord, "I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and on this Rock will I build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it¹:" and His address to S. Peter after His resurrection, "Feed my sheep," S. Cyprian remarks, "Although He gave equal power to all His Apostles after His resurrection, when He said, 'As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you;' and ... 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins ye

¹ S. Matt. xvi. 18.

remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose sins ye retain, they are retained'; yet to manifest unity He hath by His authority appointed that the origin of unity should begin from one. What S. Peter was, the other Apostles indeed also were, namely, endowed with an equal share of honour and power; but the beginning is from unity. He who holds not this unity of the Church, does he believe that he holds the Faith? He who opposes and strives against the Church, does he trust that he is in the Church? When the blessed Apostle Paul teaches the same, and shows the sacrament of unity, saying, 'There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism¹.' He also proves the enormity of the crime of schism, and that without the Church there is no martyrdom. "He shall never arrive at the rewards of Christ who hath abandoned the Church of Christ; he is a foreigner, a profane person, and an enemy. He cannot have God for his Father who hath not the Church for his Mother." Cyprian further demonstrates, that having once confessed Christ is no security against the temptations of the devil. They only who endure to the end shall be saved. In his treatise *On the Lapsed*, he spares no reproaches, to humble them for their sin, and relates many instances of the judgments of God which fell on the apostates. A woman who had denied Christ was seized by an evil spirit, while in a public bath, and died within a few hours in great torment, tearing her flesh with her teeth. A little child had been taken by its nurse to the magistrate, and had

¹ S. John xx. 21—23.² Eph. iv. 4, 5.

been made to taste bread dipped in the wine of the heathen sacrifice. Its mother, in ignorance of what had been done, afterwards carried it to church, where it cried and sobbed during the celebration of the mysteries. And when the deacon approached to give it the holy communion under the one species of the chalice, and had put a little into its mouth, it rejected it violently. A woman who had lapsed was terrified by a flame of fire issuing from the repository in her house where the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Body was reserved, as she ventured to open it. Many others were seized with unclean spirits, and lost their reason.

S. Cyprian was frequently engaged at this time in defending the cause of Cornelius against the Novatian schismatics. Their party was condemned by a council held at Antioch in 252, in compliance with a letter from S. Cornelius. In May of the same year a council assembled at Carthage to consider again the case of some of the Christians who had been forced by torture to renounce the Faith, and generally of all the lapsed. It made a distinction between those who had wholly fallen away, and those who were expiating their fault by penance and bitter tears. As the Church seemed on the eve of another persecution, these were reconciled without any further delay, that they might not want the grace needful for their trial, when it arrived. And a synodal letter was written to Rome announcing this decree of the council.

The Novatians had ordained Fortunatus to the see of Carthage, and had appealed, in support of their claims, to the Bishop of Rome. S. Cornelius summarily condemned them, and wrote to S. Cyprian

on the subject. The bishop of Carthage replied in a letter which contains this sentence ; “ From no other source do heresies arise and schisms take their birth than from this, that men do not obey the Bishop of God, and do not think that there is one Bishop in the Church at a time, and that for the time he is the judge in the place of Christ¹. ”

Soon afterwards, the persecution under Gallus and his son Volusian began, and the cry of ‘ Cyprian to the lions ’ was renewed. It was then that he probably composed his *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. S. Cornelius was the first who confessed Christ in Rome, and was banished to Civita Vecchia. He received a letter from S. Cyprian in his exile. On the 14th of September in the same year, he passed from suffering to glory. Lucius, who succeeded him, was also sent into banishment, but soon returned, and died in March, 253. During his short pontificate, S. Cyprian addressed a letter to him, and represented the persecution as sent for the trial of the Church, and for the separation of its faithful members from the heretics. In the month of May, 253, S. Stephen was elected Bishop of Rome.

Africa and other parts of the empire were then afflicted with a grievous pestilence. It was in order to appease the wrath of the gods that the imperial edict to offer sacrifices to them had gone forth, which had given rise to the persecution. Great numbers fell a prey to it ; and in the general panic which seized the people, the dying and the dead were left untended. S. Cyprian laboured unceasingly to excite

¹ Epist. lv. ad Cornel.

the Christians of Carthage to works of mercy, and with great success. The poor cheerfully bestowed their labour, and the rich furnished the needful supplies of money. And all vied with each other in fulfilling the last duties to the miserable victims, without making any distinction between Christians and pagans; for the charity of God which animated them, is as universal as the Redemption which He consummated on the Cross: it requires no other qualification than wretchedness. To comfort the faithful in the view of death, S. Cyprian wrote a treatise *On Mortality*. Thirteen centuries later in the world's history, the Church of Milan beheld another Cyprian, in her blessed archbishop, S. Charles Borromeo. Undaunted by the plague which then raged in the city, he carried the heavenly sacraments of Christ to the couch of the dying, from which the tenderest of earthly friends had fled in dismay. He was imitated by many of his clergy and the religious orders.

The empire was harassed by wars with many of its barbarous foes, as the Scythians, Goths, and Persians; and the Christians bore the blame of all those evils. S. Cyprian represented to Demetrian, the governor, that their innocent blood was the real cause. He spoke in glowing language of the strength of their hope, the firmness of their faith, their spirit raised above the ruins of the world, their virtue immovable, their constant patience, and their souls ever resting in God. With these he contrasted the anxiety and alarm which filled the hearts of the pagans. The barbarians made an inroad into Numidia, and carried away many Christian captives. The bishops appealed to the charity of the faithful, to

rescue them from slavery. S. Cyprian with many tears read their letter to his flock, and collected a large sum of money in Carthage for the ransom. Many other African bishops did the same.

During this persecution some of the bishops, in consecrating the Blessed Eucharist, had used water alone in the chalice. For as the Christians generally received it fasting, and early in the morning, the odour of wine might have betrayed them to their enemies. The adorable Sacrifice was sometimes offered in the evening also, and then wine and water were used, for only a few of the people could then be present, and hence the evening oblation was considered less solemn. S. Cyprian wrote in condemnation of the *Aquarii*, or users of water, as they were called. He proved the necessity of having wine in the chalice, mixed with water, from the obligation to do as our Saviour Himself did. He also drew an analogy from the example of Melchisedec, which has ever been considered a remarkable type of the Christian Sacrifice. Wine and water are mixed in the chalice, as S. Cyprian remarks, to signify the union of Christ and his faithful people, from Whom they cannot be separated. He concludes by declaring, that the holy Eucharist can no more be consecrated with water alone, than with wine alone. For "the priest is truly the vicar of Jesus Christ, when he imitates what Christ did; he offers in the Church a true Sacrifice, when he offers That Which Christ offered."

In May, 253, Gallus and his son were put to death by the soldiers, at Turin. After a reign of four months, Emilianus, the usurper, met with the same fate, and Licinius Valerian obtained possession of the

throne. For three years the Church enjoyed rest. A council of sixty-six bishops met at Carthage, to settle some questions of discipline. They examined the case of Geminus Victor, a deceased laic of the Church of Furnes in Africa, who had named a priest as his executor in his last will. A former council had forbidden the clergy to accept of such an office, except when it was enjoined by the state; and had threatened with severe penalties those who should invite them to undertake it. The council of Carthage therefore decreed that the holy Sacrifice should not be offered for his soul, and that no one should pray for him. A certain comedian had left the stage, but still gave lessons in his art. S. Cyprian declared him unworthy to be admitted to communion.

About this time, the great question arose, regarding the validity of baptism when given by heretics. S. Cyprian being first consulted, pronounced it to be no baptism, unless it is given in the communion of the Church. And therefore all heretics who are reconciled ought, as he said, to be baptized. As an authority for his opinion, he cited the practice of his predecessor Agrippinus. He was supported by Dionysius of Alexandria, and by a synod of thirty-two African bishops. A larger council of seventy-one bishops declared the necessity of baptizing and ordaining all who came into the Church from heretical bodies. Cyprian defended the validity of clinical baptism by aspersion, on the bed of sickness. But those who had been christened in this manner were then generally thought unfit for the priesthood, if they recovered. In this controversy, mention is made of the holy oil which was used in baptism. Two

bishops of this council were sent to Rome to report its decision to S. Stephen. Without even admitting them into his presence, he condemned it as a novelty, and refused to communicate with Cyprian and his followers, unless they would give up their error. He promulgated his sentence to the whole Church, as agreeing with her most ancient and unvarying teaching, that all who should be received into communion from among the heretics, should be admitted by penance, and the imposition of the hands of a bishop.

Cyprian wrote many letters on this subject, and a treatise *On Patience*, to allay the irritation which difference of opinion was apt to excite. He gave a full account of his reason for still holding an opposite belief to S. Stephen's decision; alleging that the old custom was erroneous, and that as baptism is a new birth, it cannot take place but in the one Spouse of Christ. He summoned a council to meet at Carthage in 256, at which eighty-five bishops were present. In his address to the synod he remarked that none of them were Bishops of bishops, a title which Tertullian had given to S. Zephyrinus, Bishop of Rome; and that no one attempted tyrannically to rule over others. For each bishop, as he said, has an entire will and power of his own, and as he cannot be judged by another, so he cannot judge another. He recommended them to await the judgment of the Lord Jesus, Who alone has power in the government of His Church. This authority may be said to belong to each bishop, if the Catholic Church has not spoken by the voice of a general council, as S. Augustin remarks, in explanation of S. Cyprian's words, and in apology for his having been deceived in so

difficult a question. All the African bishops approved of his opinion, as well as some in the East. The chief of these was Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia. The decision of S. Stephen was received by the rest of the Catholic Church.

An unknown author wrote in its defence, who from some expressions is supposed to have been a bishop. His strongest argument is drawn from the unbroken tradition of the Church. He makes a distinction between the baptism of water in the Divine Name, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands. The former alone he maintains to be possible without the pale of the Church; so that where it had been received, nothing was wanting but the episcopal hands to complete the baptism of a reconciled heretic. He also used the example of the validity of a sacrament, even though it is administered by a wicked priest. Other doctors have taught, that the error of Cyprian arose from his not distinguishing between the sacrament of baptism and its effect or grace. The former, as they allege, is completed when it is given in the name of the most Holy Trinity, while the grace can flow only through the appointed channel of the Church.

What followed immediately after this council of Carthage is not known. Cyprian and Firmilian maintained their own opinion, but they never violated the unity of the Church, or holy charity; and with good faith they defended a practice which had not then been condemned by the voice of the Catholic Church. Yet the conduct of S. Stephen, in resting his decision upon her uniform custom, was more in accordance with truth and with the implicit

faith which Christians owe to the promise of their Lord, that He would guide them into all truth. The error of Cyprian was expiated by the blood of his martyrdom, as S. Augustin has observed. The African bishops afterwards revoked the decree of the council of Carthage, but the Donatist body, in the following century, revived, or rather continued the error. It was first condemned by the synod of Arles in 314, and finally in the general council of Nicæa in 325.

In 257, the eighth general persecution began, under Valerian. S. Stephen was the first in Rome to suffer martyrdom. His festival is kept on the 2nd of August in the Western Church. He was succeeded by S. Sixtus, or Xystus, whom we have already seen going before his deacon S. Laurence, on the path of glory. On the 30th of August, in the same year, S. Cyprian was brought before Paternus the proconsul. When he was asked his name, he replied, I am a Christian and a bishop. I know no other gods than the true God alone, Who hath made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that they contain. He is the God Whom we serve, we and other Christians, and to Whom we pray night and day, for ourselves and for all men, even for the emperors. Threats failed to move him to alter his resolution, or to give up the names of his clergy, and he was banished to Curuba, a small town on the coast, about fifty miles from Carthage. The public assemblies of the Christians, and their visits to the cemeteries were forbidden, on pain of death.

S. Cyprian arrived in Curuba on the 14th of September. The Christian inhabitants welcomed his coming with joy, and consoled him by their visits.

On the first night which he passed there, he was favoured with a vision, which he related to Pontius, his deacon, and the historian of his life. As he was falling asleep, he saw a youth, whose stature was greater than human, and who seemed to lead him to the tribunal of the governor. When the judge had looked upon him, he began to write his sentence on a tablet, but what it was he did not know, for he had not been questioned as usual. But the youth, though he too was silent, looked over the tablet with great curiosity, and made signs to him that it was a sentence of death, imitating with his hand the stroke of the executioner's sword. Cyprian entreated to have one day's delay, that he might arrange his affairs. The youth signified to him that the judge had granted it. One year afterwards he finished his course by the sword.

The Christians in Africa shared the honour of his confession. Nine bishops with some of the clergy, and many virgins, and children, and laics, were cruelly beaten, and condemned to the mines. These bishops had assisted at the last council of Carthage. They were loaded with fetters, and made their bed on the bare earth, and endured cold, and hunger, and every misery. But their greatest privation was not being allowed to celebrate the Christian mysteries. S. Cyprian consoled them in a letter, and besought them to call upon God without ceasing, that He might give them grace to finish their confession to His honour, and might deliver them gloriously from the darkness and snares of this world. He sent them money also. This little company of martyrs sealed their confession with their blood, chiefly in

Utica and its neighbourhood. Their numbers are variously recorded, from a hundred and fifty, to three hundred. They are known in ecclesiastical history by the name of *Massa candida*, or the White Mass, in allusion to their having been thrown alive into a pit of burning quicklime.

S. Cyprian remained in Curuba about eleven months. He was busily engaged in settling the affairs of the Church, and of the poor. As soon as he was allowed to return to Carthage, he distributed among the poor all that remained of his property. He seems to have renewed his communion with the see of Rome, for we find him sending messengers thither to bring him news of the events which happened there. Among these was the happy martyrdom of the chief Bishop on the 6th of August, 258. The persecution daily grew hotter. Cyprian diligently instructed his flock, as opportunity and the pressing danger allowed him. He urged the bishops to prepare the people for martyrdom, and to bid them look forward rather to immortality than to death. Many senators and persons of influence in Carthage visited him, and entreated him to remove further from the scene of danger, and even offered him a place of retreat. He at first refused; but when he heard that Galerius Maximus, the new pro-consul, had sent soldiers from Utica, where he was then staying, to take him, he withdrew for a little time. For he desired, if it were the will of God, to make his last confession in his own city of Carthage, and among his children in Christ. While he lay in concealment, he wrote for the last time to his clergy,

H h

and entreated them to keep the rules of discipline, and to remain quiet and resigned in all events.

When the proconsul returned to Carthage, S. Cyprian went back to his house. It stood in a garden, in the suburbs. On the 13th of September, officers arrived to take him. They thought to surprise him, but he was waiting for them. They placed him in a chariot, and carried him to Sextus, a country-seat of the governor, about six miles distant. S. Cyprian wore a gay and cheerful countenance, for he thought he was going to instant death. But he was remanded till next day, and was lodged during that night in the house of the chief officer, in Carthage. His friends were allowed to take supper with him, and to spend the rest of the time in his company. The news that he was taken had spread through the city, and a vast concourse of people had assembled at the house where he was, some to strengthen their faith by witnessing his constancy, and others to compassionate his fate, as they deemed it. For his charities had won the hearts of all the people. The Christians passed the night in the street, fearing lest any thing might happen without their seeing it. The holy bishop, ever anxious for the weal of his flock, sent orders that special care should be taken of the young maidens in the crowd.

Slowly the night wore away, and the morning of the 14th of September, 258, dawned bright and cloudless upon the city of Carthage. Cyprian was summoned before the governor. He was attended by his faithful people to the tribunal of justice, which was distant about a furlong from the chief officer's

house. The proconsul was not ready when they arrived, and a seat was provided for the confessor in a retired place. It was observed that it was covered with a linen cloth, such as usually distinguished the chair of a bishop.

At length S. Cyprian stood before Galerius, and was interrogated, Art thou Thascius Cyprian? I am. Art thou esteemed as a Father by sacrilegious persons? I am. The most sacred emperors command thee to offer sacrifice. I will not obey. Be advised. Do what thou art commanded; in a matter so plain, there is no need of asking advice. The governor, after consulting with others, pronounced sentence in this manner: Because thou hast lived for a long time in sacrilege, and hast assembled in wicked conspiracy so many persons, and hast been the open enemy of the Roman gods and the sacred laws; and because thou art the author and standard-bearer of most heinous crimes, thou shalt be a warning to those whom thou hast associated with thee in sin; the law shall be avenged by thy blood. Then he wrote upon a tablet, Thascius Cyprian shall be punished by the sword. To which the bishop answered, *Deo gratias*, —Thanks be to God. The people cried with a loud voice, that they were willing to die with him.

The soldiers then led him into the country, to a place surrounded by trees, into which many climbed, to witness his passion. As soon as they had arrived, Cyprian threw off his mantle, and remained a long time in prayer to God, prostrate on the ground. He laid aside his dalmatic, a kind of tunic which was then commonly worn, and was named from Dalmatia, the province where it was first used. It is

now the distinguishing vestment of a subdeacon in the Latin Church. He gave the executioner twenty-five pieces of gold. With his own hands he bound his eyes; Julian, his deacon, and his subdeacon of the same name, tied his hands. The Christians spread cloths around him to catch his blood. At length the sword of the executioner fell, and the soul of the martyr-bishop was dismissed to the society of his mates in heaven.

S. Cyprian was the first bishop of Carthage who suffered death for the faith. To avoid the irreverent curiosity of the heathen, the Christians at first carried his body to a house near, with great ceremony, in the midst of torches and tapers. Flavian, a deacon, had a vision of the martyr, and seemed to ask him if the confessors of Christ felt the mortal stroke painful. He answered, The flesh suffers not, when the spirit is in heaven, and the body feels no pain, when the soul is wholly given to God. Two churches were built near Carthage in his honour. One of them, called *Mensa Cypriani*, or the Table of Cyprian, stood on the spot of his triumph, and the other, called *Mappalia*, enclosed his remains. In one of these S. Monica spent the night weeping, after the departure of S. Augustin to Rome. They fell into the hands of the Arians while the Vandals had possession of Africa, in the fifth century, but they were restored to the Catholics in 533 by Belisarius, the general of the emperor Justinian. A great victory which he gained over the Vandals, was won on the eve of the festival of S. Cyprian. In 806, the ambassadors of Charlemagne, on their return from the court of Persia, passed through Africa, and carried away the relics of

the saint. They brought them first to Arles, and thence to Lyons. Finally they were deposited in the monastery of Compiègne, by Charles the Bald. Part of the relics of SS. Cyprian and Cornelius are in the church of Rosnay, near Oudenarde in Flanders.

The name of S. Cyprian is venerated throughout the Church. It has been mentioned in the Canon of the Mass at least since the days of S. Gregory the Great. In an ancient Roman kalendar, the Sundays between the 14th of September and the beginning of Advent are reckoned from his festival. The same occurs in some Gallican books. Prudentius, in the fourth age, attests the honour which was paid to the martyr in Spain. Since the fifth century, his name has usually been associated in the kalendars with S. Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, whose decease happened on the same day of the month. Thus in the Preface for their festival, in the Sacramentary of S. Gregory, are these words: "And to preach Thy power on the festivity of Thy Saints Cornelius and Cyprian: whom feeding their flocks with divine bread, in different parts of the earth, in one Faith and on the same day, Thou didst crown with an equal confession of Thy name." But when the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross claimed more exclusive honour from the faithful, the 16th of September was devoted to the memories of these saintly bishops. S. Augustin and S. Jerom frequently allude to S. Cyprian in their writings. Later authors without number have commemorated him as a great doctor of the Church.

The works of S. Cyprian have ever been very highly esteemed by the Church. One of the earliest

is, *On the discipline and habit of Virgins*. His treatises *On the lapsed*, and *On the unity of the Church*, have already engaged our notice. In 252, he composed his celebrated work *On the Lord's Prayer*. Besides these, his tracts *On zeal and envy*, *On works and alms*, his history of the council of Carthage which pronounced judgment in the question of baptism, and eighty-three epistles, attest his diligence and learning. A defence of the Christian Faith, called *The Testimony*, in three books, is sometimes attributed to him, but with no great certainty.

S. Gregory Nazianzen, in the fourth century, has made honourable mention of S. Cyprian in his works. But he seems to have confounded some of the events of his life with the history of another Cyprian, in whose honour the 26th of September was formerly kept holy in England, as it is still in the Latin Church. The archbishop of Carthage was then commemorated on the 16th of September, as on the day of his martyrdom. The Eastern and Western Churches still observe that day in his honour. This is a further confirmation of the religious intention of the framers of the present English kalendar in preserving the names of the saints. For with the 26th of September, the memory alone of the archbishop is connected. All the secular associations of his feast belong to the day on which he was anciently honoured.

S. Cyprian, to whom our ancestors dedicated the 26th of September, along with the blessed virgin and martyr S. Justina, was a native of Antioch, not the original see of S. Peter, but a town probably on the

confines of Syria and Arabia. He was famed for his learning and accomplishments, but he was an idolater. Moreover he was the servant of demons, and practised magical arts. He employed them in his wicked designs against the lives and virtue of many who lived near him. He also taught his forbidden secrets to a school of disciples. There was at that time in Antioch a young and noble lady, named Justina, who had been once a heathen, but since her conversion had devoted herself to her Lord by a vow of eternal fidelity. Her beauty had won the heart of Agladius, a youthful friend of Cyprian. In vain he tried every means to get her into his power; and at last he entreated Cyprian to assist him with his magic. He agreed to do so, and for seventy days he assailed the holy virgin with his impure spells. In her distress, as S. Gregory Nazianzen relates, she implored the Blessed Virgin-Mother of God to succour a virgin in danger. To her prayers she joined mortifications and severe living; and finally, with the help of God, the demon was vanquished by the sign of the Cross.

Cyprian had shared the unhallowed desires of his friend. And when he perceived that his arts had failed, he was so overwhelmed with shame and disappointment, that, touched by the grace of God, he renounced the practice of magic. He burnt all his books, like the converts of earlier days¹, and gave all his wealth to the poor. And in due time he was received into the Church, with his friend Agladius. Justina was filled with gratitude to God for His mercy towards her tempters, and she also

¹ Acts xix. 19.

gave her riches to the poor, and devoted herself to an ascetic life. In the course of years, Cyprian became bishop of his native town, and in 304, he consummated his penitence by martyrdom. S. Justina suffered along with him, in the city of Nicomedia. The Greeks keep their principal festival on the 2nd of October ; the Latin Church, on the 26th of September. Their names occur in the martyrology of Ven. Bede, and in other ancient records. Their relics were made illustrious by miracles, and were afterwards translated to the cathedral basilica of S. John Lateran, in Rome.

The lions prowl around, thy grave to guard,
And Moslem prayers profane
At morn and eve come sounding ; yet, unscared,
The holy Shades remain ;—
Cyprian, thy chief of watchmen, wise and bold,
Trusting the love of his own loyal heart,
And Cyprian's Master, as in age high-souled,
Yet choosing as in youth the better part.
There, too, unwearied Austin, thy keen gaze
On Atlas' steep, a thousand years and more,
Dwells, waiting for the first rekindling rays,
When Truth upon the solitary shore
For the fallen West may light his beacon as of yore.

Cathedral, p. 282.

SEPTEMBER 30.

S. Jerom, Priest, Confessor, and Doctor.

420.

S. JEROM was born at Stridonium, a small town on the confines of Pannonia, Dalmatia, and Italy, now called Sdrigni. The date of his birth was probably

about the year 342, though some historians have fixed it a few years earlier. His father Eusebius was rich, and spared no pains with his education. He was sent to Rome, to finish his studies under Donatus, a famous grammarian. There he made great progress in the Latin and Greek languages, and other branches of human learning. But the temptations of the luxurious capital, and the example of his companions, carried him away for a time into open excesses, while the grace was wanting which flows through the holy sacrament of regeneration. For Jerom was yet unbaptized. Yet even then, signs of his future piety marked his course. He has himself described how "when he was a boy, he was wont on Sundays, with others of the same age and inclinations, to visit the catacombs and cemeteries beneath the earth, where the bodies of the holy apostles and martyrs rested¹."

When his studies were finished, he pleaded for some time at the bar with great applause. He was also diligently occupied in transcribing books for his library. In order to increase his knowledge, he undertook a journey into Gaul, and visited several schools of learning which were established there. At Treves he remained for some time, with Bonosus, a companion of his travels. During his stay, his heart was converted to God ; he renounced the pleasures which had hitherto engaged him, and dedicated himself wholly to the Divine service by a vow of perpetual celibacy. He went to Aquileia in 372, to enjoy the society of the holy bishop Valerian, and the learned and saintly men whom he had gathered around him.

¹ In Ezek. xl.

Many of them became the intimate friends of S. Jerom, and their history is often connected with his own. The most eminent of these is S. Chromatius, who succeeded S. Valerian in the see, and to whom S. Jerom has dedicated several of his works; and Rufinus, whose later controversy with the saint has made him famous. The monastic life seems to have been practised among the brethren at Aquileia, probably according to the rule of the Egyptian ascetics, which S. Athanasius had introduced into Italy during his exile. From Aquileia S. Jerom returned to Rome. It is uncertain whether he then received holy baptism, or whether it had been conferred on him by Liberius, who died in 366, before his journey to Gaul. The grace of purity, which was restored to him in that mystery, he preserved inviolate till his death.

In the year 373, he resolved to go into the East, that, amidst the scenes of our redemption, he might have more leisure for solitary study and contemplation than he could enjoy at Rome. Evagrius, a priest of Antioch, was about to return home from Italy, after consulting Damasus, Bishop of Rome, on the affairs of his Church; and S. Jerom travelled with him, attended by three companions. They passed into Thrace, and thence into Pontus, Bithynia, and Galatia, and visited on their way many of the holy ascetics who lived in retirement in those countries. At Cæsarea they had an interview with the great S. Basil. They arrived safely at Antioch, where S. Jerom became acquainted with Apollinaris. This was a few years before his lamentable apostasy from the Catholic Faith.

The saint did not remain very long in Antioch, but retired to the desert of Chalcida, between Syria and Arabia. Innocent and Heliodorus, and a slave named Hylas, the companions of his journey from Italy, went with him. Evagrius, who was rich, supplied him with books and every thing necessary ; for S. Jerom had brought with him little of this world's wealth, and supported himself in the wilderness by the labour of his hands. He devoted his time also to study, during the four years which he spent in those solitudes. Two of his friends were soon taken from him by death, and Heliodorus left him to return to the West. He was himself afflicted with frequent sickness, and still more terribly by temptations to impurity, which the remembrance of his former life of luxury in Rome presented. Long and severe penances at length subdued his rebellious will. He has described the calm which filled his soul, when the arts of the tempter were overcome. " The Lord is my witness, that after many tears, after fixing my eyes on heaven, I sometimes seemed to myself to be present among the choirs of angels, and in joy and gladness I sang, ' After Thee will we run, because of the savour of Thine ointments.' " As a further penance, he applied himself to the study of the Hebrew language. It was at first most galling to him to turn from the polished writings of the Latin classics, in which he took great delight, to its rude and uncouth sounds. After surmounting many difficulties, and even more than once giving up the task in despair, he gained a perfect knowledge of the language, and found it of infinite use in his sacred studies. He had for his master a converted Jew.

The Church of Antioch was at that time torn by dissensions, in which the monks of the Eastern deserts took a lively interest. They arose from the banishment of S. Eustathius, the patriarch of Antioch, in 331, by a council of Arian bishops. Nearly all the Catholics continued to communicate with him till his death, though a few were persuaded by the Arians to recognize the schismatical patriarchs whom they put into the see. In the year 360 these persons united with the Arians in electing S. Meletius to the vacant patriarchate. He was a man of unsuspected orthodoxy, and of a most holy life, and the Arians seem to have chosen him only because they hoped to gain him afterwards to their party. But some of the Catholics would not recognize his election, owing to the share which the heretics had in it, and they appointed Paulinus to the see. The Bishop of Rome and the Western and Egyptian prelates supported him ; while S. Basil, SS. Gregory of Nazianzum and of Nyssa, and S. Chrysostom, communicated with S. Meletius. This controversy lasted till the year 379, when it was ended by mutual concessions, before the council of Constantinople assembled, at which S. Meletius presided, in 381. It was unhappily revived at his death, by the appointment of a successor to him, during the life of Paulinus.

The monks who lived in the Syrian deserts, following the Eastern bishops, took part with Meletius, and suspected S. Jerom, from his connection with Rome, of favouring Paulinus. They urged him to support S. Meletius, but he declared that he had hitherto espoused the cause of neither, and refused to join them. They also tried to ensnare him by

proposing questions to him regarding the nature of the Blessed Trinity, which admitted of a double answer. He was so wearied and perplexed by their importunity, that in 377 he wrote for advice to the Bishop of Rome. In his first letter to Damasus, he used these remarkable words: "Since the East is agitated by the ancient madness of the people among themselves, and is rending in pieces the undivided garment of Christ, which is woven wholly throughout; since foxes are rooting up the vine of Christ, so that among these broken cisterns one can hardly discover where is the fountain enclosed, the garden sealed; therefore I have resolved to consult the chair of Peter, and the faith praised by apostolic lips. I seek thence for food for my soul, whence I once received the garments of Christ. For neither could so vast a tract of water, nor the many lands which intervene, prevent me from seeking for this precious pearl. Where the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Although thy greatness would terrify me, yet thy humanity invites me. I a victim beg for safety from the Priest, a sheep from the Shepherd asks shelter. Let envy depart, and ambitious desire of the Roman preeminence, when I speak with the successor of the Fisherman, with the disciple of the Cross. I, following none as first but Christ, am associated in the communion of your beatitude, that is, of the chair of Peter. Upon this rock I know that the Church is built; whoever shall eat the lamb out of this house is profane. If any one is not in the ark of Noah, he shall perish in the prevailing deluge¹." The second letter which he

¹ Ep. xiv. ad Damasum.

wrote on the same subject contains similar expressions.

The answer of the pope to these appeals does not remain; but S. Jerom, finding his life embittered by the persecutions of the monks, left the desert, and came to Jerusalem. He remained for a little while at Bethlehem, and then went to Antioch, in the end of the year 377. In 378, Paulinus, the bishop of one of the parties of Catholics in that city, ordained him priest. So unworthy of the honour did he deem himself, that he would not receive it, till he had gained leave to abstain from the performance of its sacred functions, in the Church of Antioch, or in any other. It is uncertain how long he remained there, but between the years 379 and 381 he went to Constantinople, to study holy Scripture under S. Gregory Nazianzen, the patriarch. This father had been then recently translated from the bishopric of Sasima, in Cappadocia, to the see of Constantinople; and daily taught the Catholic Faith, in refutation of the Arian heresy, as much by his life of poverty and self-discipline, as by his eloquent discourses. S. Jerom regarded him with the deepest veneration. He seems to have been then chiefly employed in translating into Latin the chronicle of Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea.

When S. Gregory resigned the see of Constantinople in 381, S. Jerom returned to the Holy Land. In 382 he went to Rome, and was present at a council which Damasus held there, for the purpose of settling the disputes at Antioch. S. Ambrose, S. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, and Paulinus of Antioch, assisted at its deliberations. The two eastern

bishops returned home early in the following year ; but S. Jerom remained to assist Damasus in answering the numerous applications for advice which were made to him from every part of Christendom. The Bishop often consulted him on questions regarding the meaning of holy Scripture. He was also engaged in writing a treatise against Helvidius, an Arian priest of Milan, who denied the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Mother of God.

In Rome, S. Jerom found many holy ladies who eagerly sought his company ; and his time was much occupied in interpreting holy Scripture to them. S. Marcella was remarkable for the aptness with which she received his instructions. She had been left a widow in the seventh month after her marriage, and had dedicated herself to God more than forty years before ; and then lived in retirement not far from Rome, with her daughter Principia. Her sister Asella and her mother Albina were also among the friends of S. Jerom. Asella had lived for forty years in religious seclusion, and in the practice of every austerity, ever since she was ten years old. The most illustrious of those pious women was S. Paula ; whose rank and descent were only surpassed by the lowliness of her demeanour, and her abounding charity. Her father Rogatus traced his pedigree from remote antiquity, and through her mother Blesilla she claimed kindred with the Scipios and the Gracchi. Her husband, who was then dead, was of the Julian family, one of the most illustrious in Rome. Her eldest daughter Blesilla, had become a widow at the age of twenty ; and S. Jerom counselled her to despise the pleasures of the world, and devote herself

to God. But while she was meditating compliance with his advice, she was seized with mortal illness, and so departed. Hardly could S. Jerom console her mother for her loss. Paulina, the second daughter of S. Paula, was married to a noble Roman youth, an early friend and companion of S. Jerom ; and after her happy decease he embraced the monastic vows. Eustochium her sister was a holy virgin, whose history we shall trace as we follow S. Jerom. Rufina the youngest daughter was married. Their brother Toxotius espoused Leta, the daughter of a pagan, but herself a Christian. The soul of her father was, in his old age, granted to her prayers. Another friend of S. Jerom was Lea, a widow, the superior of a convent, which she governed with great devotion and humility ; also Fabiola, the foundress of the first hospital for the sick in Rome, in 380 ; and Melania, of whom we have heard in the life of S. Augustin of Hippo.

In 384, S. Damasus died, in his eightieth year. S. Jerom did not long remain in Rome ; for his great fame had provoked the jealousy of the clergy, and the authority of Damasus had been alone able to prevent them from openly showing it. Many of them seem to have been devoted to idle and effeminate habits, spending their time in visits of ceremony ; and some of them were guilty of graver offences, such as avarice and extortion. S. Jerom had warned Eustochium against their hypocrisy, in a little treatise On Virginity which he addressed to her. They resented his interference, and ridiculed his manners and even his gait. They invented scandalous stories against his reputation, and vilified the character of the holy

women whose spiritual direction he had undertaken. The Romans at that time murmured loudly against the Eastern monks, for leading away ladies of rank, and persuading them to give up all that they had in this world to purchase the eternal joys of a better life.

S. Jerom therefore resolved to leave Rome, and to return to Palestine. In the month of August, 385, he embarked, with his younger brother Paulinian, a priest named Vincent, and a few monks. On the eve of sailing, he wrote a letter to Asella, commending himself to the prayers of the devout ladies her friends. He landed in Cyprus, and was joyfully welcomed by S. Epiphanius. Thence he went to Antioch; and arrived at Jerusalem in the middle of winter. In the following spring he made a journey into Egypt. At Alexandria he studied for a month under Didymus, who was blind, but whose profound learning had made him famous in the Church. S. Jerom, though himself grey-headed, and though his own name was then celebrated in the East and West, thought no shame to sit at his feet, and consult him on holy Scripture. He then visited the monasteries of Egypt, and returned to the Holy Land, and probably to his old retreat at Bethlehem, where he continued the study of the Hebrew language, not yet deeming himself perfect in it. A great Jewish doctor was engaged to instruct him, and visited him by night, lest it should become known to the other Jews. He lived in the practice of unwearied mortification, supplying his bodily wants with the meanest fare. Part of his time was devoted to the instruction of children.

In the year after S. Jerom left Rome, S. Paula followed him, accompanied by her daughter S. Eustochium. She visited S. Epiphanius at Salamis, and was entertained by him for ten days, which she spent in travelling among the monasteries, and distributing alms. Passing through Antioch, she arrived at Jerusalem, and paid her devotions at the holy places there, and at Bethlehem. She then followed the course which S. Jerom had taken in his journey, and visited the Egyptian ascetics. The memories which hallow the land of Palestine soon brought her again to Bethlehem. In 389, she founded two monasteries near it; one for S. Jerom and the monks who lived with him, and the other for the nuns who had joined her. S. Jerom, about the same time, endowed a hospital for the entertainment of pilgrims. He sent his brother into Pannonia, to sell the remainder of his family estate, that he might give its value to the support of this house. We may learn something of the discipline which regulated those houses of religious, from the writings of S. Jerom. "After the monastery of men, which she gave up to be governed by men," he thus writes to her daughter Eustochium, when the holy Paula had been taken to eternal rest, "she gathered together many virgins from different provinces, as well noble as of the middle and lowest ranks, and divided them into three troops or monasteries; yet so that during work and meals they might be separated, but might be united in psalms and prayers. After Alleluia was sung, which was the signal for calling them together, no one was permitted to sit down. In the morning, at the Hours of Terce, Sext, and None, at vespers, and at midnight,

they sang through the Order of the Psalter. Neither was any sister allowed to be ignorant of the psalms, nor did they fail on any day to learn something from the holy Scriptures. On the Lord's day only they went to the church by the side of which they lived. Each troop followed its own mother; and thence returning together, they occupied themselves in the work which was assigned them, and made garments, either for themselves, or for others. They had all one habit, and only in drying their hands used linen. They were wholly secluded from men, that they might give no occasion to the malicious tongue, which is wont to malign the holy, for the consolation of sinners¹." They had all things in common, except their garments. Their bodies were kept in subjection by frequent fasts; and no ornaments were allowed, nor undue carefulness in dress. They were counselled to avoid much talking and mirth. A blessed sister of mercy in the fourth age is thus pourtrayed in the character which S. Jerom has given of S. Paula herself; "Why need I commemorate the clemency and assiduity shown to the sick, whom she cherished with wondrous attentions and ministries. When others languished, she provided all things for them in abundance; in this only she seemed unjust, that, if she herself were sick, she turned her clemency towards others into hardness towards herself."

S. Jerom was requested about this time by some of his friends in Rome, to refute the errors of Jovinian, an apostate monk, whom the councils of Rome and

¹ Ep. lxxxvi. ad Eustochium.

of Milan condemned in 390, as we have already seen in the life of S. Ambrose. His heresies resembled in many things the doctrines of later deceivers. And the arguments which the holy ascetic of Bethlehem used against him, are still, after the lapse of nearly fifteen hundred years, the most convincing refutation which the defenders of the Catholic faith can bring against his modern disciples.

Paulinian, the brother of S. Jerom, lived with him in the monastery at Bethlehem. S. Jerom and Vincent were the only priests in the community, but from a sense of their own unworthiness they would not perform any of the sacred offices which belonged to their order. There was a small oratory in the monastery, which they frequented only for prayer; the Christian mysteries they attended in the great church. The same feelings made Paulinian refuse to receive the priesthood. But on one occasion, when he had gone to visit S. Epiphanius in a monastery near Eleutheropolis, the saint ordained him deacon and priest, notwithstanding his unwillingness, and commanded him, on his obedience, to discharge the functions to which he had been admitted. This monastery S. Epiphanius had himself founded; and he frequently went from Salamis to overlook its concerns. Paulinian followed him to Cyprus, and remained among his clergy. But John, the patriarch of Jerusalem, complained loudly of this unlawful encroachment on his rights, as the bishop of the diocess. It was suspected that private dislike to the saint was the real cause of his protest. S. Epiphanius defended his own conduct, alleging as a reason, the edification which the Church had received, his au-

thority within his own monastery, and that Eleutheropolis was not in the jurisdiction of Jerusalem. The controversy spread to Rome; and at the request of his friends there, S. Jerom, in 393, prepared a summary of the whole case, and defended the act of S. Epiphanius.

Other disputes about the same time disturbed the calm tenour of his life. Rufinus, his former friend, had gone into the East with Melania, and after living nearly twenty-five years in Jerusalem, had returned to Rome in 397. He undertook a translation of some of the writings of Origen, and made an improper use of S. Jerom's name, as if he sanctioned the errors which they contained. For in earlier years S. Jerom had been a great admirer of the works of that learned writer, while the dangerous tendency of some of his opinions seemed compensated by his other merits. But those afterwards found many followers, and the unqualified approbation of their author's works had become full of danger. In 398, S. Marcella and the other friends of S. Jerom in Rome accused Rufinus, before Anastasius, the Bishop, of being a disciple of Origen. Anastasius summoned him from Aquileia to answer the charge, but he declined to appear. S. Jerom, hearing of what passed, wrote a defence of himself against the imputation of Rufinus, and pointed out the error into which Origen had been betrayed; while he repeated his admiration of his holy and laborious life. He provoked Rufinus exceedingly, by publishing a translation of the same work which he had unfairly used, and a controversy was thus begun between them. According to some historians, Ru-

finus was condemned by Anastasius, in 401. He was afterwards publicly reconciled to his friend, and they joined hands after Mass, in the church of the Resurrection. The correspondence between S. Augustin and S. Jerom, regarding an interpretation of the conduct of S. Peter at Antioch, which the latter had given in his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, was carried on between the years 395 and 405.

On the 26th of January, 404, S. Paula was taken to a better life, in her fifty-seventh year. The holy friendship which united her in Christ to S. Jerom, her spiritual director, invites us to listen to the narrative of her peaceful death, with which he consoled her daughter Eustochium. "The most prudent of women felt that death was coming on; and while her body grew cold, the warmth of her soul alone remained, while her heart still fluttered in her holy bosom. And as if she was going to her beloved friends, and was about to leave strangers, she murmured, 'Lord, I have loved the honour of Thine house, and the place of the habitation of Thy glory;' and, 'How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts, my soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord;' and again, 'I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners.' I asked her why she was silent and made no answer, and if she was in any pain. She replied, in the Greek language, that she felt no uneasiness, but beheld all things serene and tranquil. Then she was silent, and closing her eyes, as if turning away from mortal things, she repeated the same verses, till she breathed out her soul; and we

could hardly hear what she said. Putting her finger to her mouth, she made the sign of the cross upon her lips. At length her spirit failed, and she sighed in death. Her soul, labouring to break loose, turned the very sound with which the life of mortals is finished, into the praises of her Lord¹. Many bishops assembled to perform the last rites to her remains, with the clergy and the monks. She was borne on the shoulders of bishops to her tomb, in the church of the Nativity at Bethlehem; the rest following with torches and tapers, chaunting psalms for her repose. The poor widows and orphans whom she had nourished mourned for her as for a mother. S. Eustochium, her daughter, succeeded her in the government of her convent.

In the same year, S. Jerom wrote one of his most famous treatises against Vigilantius, a Spanish priest. This man had accused him of being a disciple of Origen, and had reviled many ancient and holy rites and doctrines of the Church, such as the use of lights at the tombs of the martyrs, prayers for the dead, the merit of the monastic life, and voluntary poverty, the veneration of relics, the intercession of the saints, vigils in the churches, and the celibacy of the priesthood. His doctrine was so openly at variance with the immemorial practice of Christians in that age, that their indignant voice condemned it at once, without the aid of any councils. But as he also has his disciples at this day, I shall quote a few sentences from the treatise of S. Jerom, in confirmation of the ancient observances.

Vigilantius had ridiculed the veneration which the

¹ Ep. lxxxvi. ad. Eustochium.

Catholics paid to relics, and accused them of worshipping the saints. "Who, O madman, ever adored the martyrs?" cries S. Jerom. "Who ever thought that man was God? But you are grieved that the relics of the martyrs are enclosed in a precious covering, and are not wrapped in coarse rags or in sackcloth, or thrown on the dunghill. Are then all the bishops not only sacrilegious but infatuated, who have borne in silken cloths and in vessels of gold a most vile thing, a few perishing ashes? Are the people of all the churches fools, who go out to meet the holy relics¹, and receive them with as much joy as if they beheld a prophet alive and present among them? So that from Palestine to Chalcedon, vast multitudes of people are united, and with one voice resound in the praises of Christ."

"The Apostles once complained that the ointment was wasted, but the Lord rebuked them," he remarks, in defence of lighted tapers in the daytime. "For Christ needed not ointment, nor the martyrs waxen tapers; and yet that woman did this in honour of Christ, and her devotion of mind is accepted; and those who kindle tapers have their reward according to their faith, as the Apostle saith, 'Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.' And, without relics of the martyrs, lights are kindled when the Gospel is read, throughout all the churches of the East, and while the sun is shining; not to chase the darkness, but as a sign of joy. Thus these virgins of the Gospel have their lamps ever burning."

Regarding the prayers which the saints in glory

¹ S. Jerom alludes to the translation of the relics of the prophet Samuel from Judea to Thrace, through Chalcedon.

offer for their brethren on earth, which S. John describes under the image of incense¹, S. Jerom has these words: "You say in your book, that while we live we may mutually pray for one another, but that after we are dead, the prayer of none for another can be heard: although the martyrs, demanding vengeance for their blood, do not cease to cry out. If the Apostles and martyrs, while yet in the body, can pray for others, while they ought still to be careful for themselves, how much rather after their crowns and victory and triumph. One man, Moses, obtains pardon from God for six hundred thousand armed men; and S. Stephen, imitating his Lord, and the first martyr in Christ, asks forgiveness for his persecutors. Shall they then prevail less when they are with Christ. Paul the Apostle says, that two hundred and seventy-six souls were given to him in the ship; after he is dissolved and is with Christ, shall his lips be closed, and shall he be unable to pray for those who throughout the whole world have believed his Gospel?"

But it was objected, that the souls of departed saints are confined in some place of rest, and cannot therefore offer their prayers to God, or know any thing of events on earth. This is S. Jerom's reply: "You say that the souls of the Apostles and martyrs rest in the bosom of Abraham, or in a place of refreshment, and under the altar of God, and cannot leave their abodes, and be present where they wish. Dost thou impose laws on God? Dost thou bind chains on the Apostles? so that till the day of judgment they are kept in ward, and may not be with the

¹ Rev. v. 8; viii. 3, 4.

Lord, of whom it is written, They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. If the Lamb is every where, then they also who are with the Lamb must be believed to be every where. And while the devil and his angels roam over the whole earth, and are every where present with too great swiftness, shall the martyrs, after the shedding of their blood, be shut up in a chest, and not be allowed to come out thence?"

The opinion of S. Jerom regarding the celibacy of the Christian priesthood is more fully expressed in his treatise against Jovinian. After citing as examples the solitary life of Jeremiah, and the clearer vision granted to Ezekiel on the death of his wife, he proceeds: "You will say that this cannot be, for bishops, priests, and deacons are appointed by the Apostle to be the husbands of one wife, and having children. How does the Apostle say that he has no precept, and yet gives counsel as one who has obtained mercy of the Lord, and in all his disputation prefers virginity to matrimony, and persuades to what he dares not command, lest he should seem to cast a snare, and to lay a heavier burden than the nature of man can bear. Thus, in appointing the ecclesiastical order, because the Church was newly formed out of the heathen nations, he gives lighter precepts to those who had lately believed, lest they should be alarmed, and be unable to bear them." As an illustration of this tender regard for the infant Church, S. Jerom mentions the silence which the Apostles in their epistle from Jerusalem¹ preserve regarding such counsels as, "He that hath two coats let him

¹ Acts xv.

give to him that hath none," and, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast." He then draws an argument from the Jewish law, in favour of the fitness of a life of continence, saying, "If even in the old law those who offered victims for the people not only did not remain in their houses¹, but were for the time separated from their wives; a priest who is ever praying, and by whom sacrifice is ever offered for the people, must be ever free from matrimony." The singularity of the opinions of Jovinian and Vigilantius on this subject, and the tone of S. Jerom's refutation, afford a strong presumption that the greater part at least of the Church in his day thought with him. But any remaining doubt is removed by his own words: "O shame, it is said that he [Vigilantius] has bishops as companions in his wickedness, if indeed they are to be called bishops, who will not ordain deacons unless they be married, distrusting the purity of all the unmarried; and unless they see the wives and crying children of clerks they will not give them the sacraments of Christ. What then shall the Churches of the East do? what, those of Egypt, and of the Apostolic See, which receive as clerks only virgins or continent persons, or if they have wives, they cease to live as married men." Not to dwell longer on this theme, let us remark that even those Churches which permit their clergy to marry, have not condemned the holy celibate, nor denied the power of ecclesiastical law or of private vow to make it binding. While those Churches which make its observance a condition of

¹ S. Luke i. 23.

admission into holy orders, have never maintained that it has higher authority than the very ancient discipline of the Church, or that dispensation from its observance might not be granted by the same power that imposed it. Thus the Eastern Church, which ordains only married men, does not allow priests to marry ; and chooses her bishops from the monks, who have taken the vows of poverty and celibacy. And the Western Church, though she requires all her clergy to remain continent, as they have by a voluntary oath bound themselves to do, yet allows a married clergy in the United Greek Church, and among the Maronites in Syria, who are in full communion with her. Let us now return to S. Jerom.

After the taking of the city of Rome by the Goths in 410, many of the inhabitants fled as far as Bethlehem. S. Jerom hospitably entertained and relieved them. His friend S. Marcella died in peace, in the midst of those scenes of tumult. She is honoured by the Church on the 31st of January. S. Jerom was deeply affected by the sight of so many noble exiles, who had lost their all, and were reduced to the last extremity of poverty. He perceived in this event the fulfilment of prophecy. For he had often declared that pagan and idolatrous Rome¹ was the Babylon of the Apocalypse, the mother of abominations, who was "drunk with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus," and whose destruction must go before the end of the world. He

¹ S. Peter also, writing from Rome to the Christians of Asia Minor, says, "The church at Babylon saluteth you."
1 S. Pet. v. 13.

was himself in danger from another horde of the northern barbarians.

The holy virgin Demetrias took the veil of a religious in the church of Carthage, in 410. Her mother and grandmother requested S. Jerom to send her a Rule for her conduct. He accordingly wrote to her a very full summary of the duties of a Christian virgin, and urged her to practise manual labour. He also cautioned her against the errors of Origen.

In 414, S. Jerom wrote against the heresy of Pelagius. In June 415 it was the subject of a conference of clergy at Jerusalem, who referred it to Innocent, Bishop of Rome. S. Jerom makes honourable mention of the labours of S. Augustin in defence of the Catholic Faith. The Pelagians were so provoked by his zeal against them, that they attacked and burned to the ground the monasteries which S. Paula had founded at Bethlehem. S. Jerom saved his life by flight. In 419, he wrote to Augustin and Alypius, thanking them for the services which they had rendered to the Church, and expressing his earnest desire to go and see them. It is the last letter of his which remains. On the 28th of September, in that year, or in 418, as Tillemont says, S. Eustochium, his spiritual daughter, was taken to bliss. She is remembered by the Church on that day.

In the following year, S. Jerom departed in peace, on the 30th of September. None of the circumstances of his end have been recorded. But we may not think that they were unlike those of other holy persons, whose deeds of piety and charity had gone before them to heaven. He was buried in a

vault among the ruins of his monastery. His remains were afterwards removed to the church of S. Mary Major at Rome. A Roman martyrology mentions this translation on the 9th of May. His festival is marked in the Sacramentary of S. Gregory, and in ancient martyrologies. It is said of him, that whether he was eating or drinking, or whatever he was doing, the awful trumpet of the doom was ever sounding in his ears, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!

“One may say of him,” as Tillemont remarks, “that he was in a certain sense, like S. Paul, a savour of life to the good, and a savour of death to sinners. He was hated during his life by heretics, and by irregular monks and clerks, who would not endure his reproof of their errors and vices. He was on the contrary admired and loved by the saints, who honoured his virtue, and who saw with joy the labours which he undertook for the good of the Church.” None of the early fathers, except Origen, may be compared with him for profound learning. The devotion of his soul to the maintenance of the Catholic faith has never been surpassed. His ardour sometimes carried him even beyond the limits of prudence. So that many expressions in his writings, taken by themselves, have been wrested by designing men into a heretical meaning, which was far from his thoughts.

The greatest work of his life was the translation of the holy Scriptures into the Latin language. In the time of the Apostles, and probably with their sanction, translations had been made into the various languages which were spoken in the newly founded

Churches, and among others into the Latin. These became so multiplied, that in the fourth century hardly any copies of the Latin translations agreed with each other. The most correct was called the Italic, probably from being used chiefly in Italy. S. Damasus engaged S. Jerom, during his visit to Rome in 382, to revise the translation of the holy Gospels, and to compare it with the original Greek. He afterwards did the same with the rest of the New Testament. This translation insensibly took the place of all the others, and is now generally known in the Western Church as the Latin Vulgate of the New Testament.

S. Jerom then corrected the Italic version of many of the books of the Old Testament, by comparing it with the Greek Septuagint. He twice revised the psalter in the same manner. Afterwards, he proceeded to translate the Old Testament, from the original Hebrew, into Latin; a more laborious work. His version was received in many churches in the time of S. Gregory the Great, who gives it the preference. S. Isidore, bishop of Seville, also in the sixth age, writes that all the Churches used it. They retained in the Divine Office the first version of the psalter which S. Jerom had made from the Greek; but by degrees admitted his second correction of it, and not his translation from the original. The present Latin Vulgate Bible contains his translation of the Old Testament, except in a very few books which were not extant in Hebrew when he wrote, and which still remain as in the ancient Vulgate. The psalter is his second amended version from the Greek. In the church of the Vatican at

Rome, in S. Mark's at Venice, and at Milan, the old Italic psalter is still used. The council of Trent declared the Latin Vulgate to be an authentic translation of the holy Scriptures, but gave full liberty to any persons to consult them in the original languages. In the English psalter, the words of intonation of each psalm are taken from the Latin Vulgate, though the general translation follows more closely S. Jerom's own version from the Hebrew. The psalter in the English Bible is still nearer it. It is perhaps needless to mention that the 9th psalm, *Confitebor Tibi*, in the Latin Vulgate, includes the 9th and 10th in the English psalter. The 113th psalm, *In exitu Israel*, contains the 114th and 115th of the English version. The 114th, *Dilexi quoniam*, ends with the ninth verse of the English 116th psalm, and the tenth verse, *Credidi*, is the first of the Vulgate 115th. And the 147th psalm, *Lauda Jerusalem*, in the Vulgate begins with the twelfth verse of the English 147th.

S. Jerom also wrote many treatises in explanation of holy Scripture, and commentaries on the prophets and on the Gospel of S. Matthew. He compiled a book *Of ecclesiastical writers*, which contains the names of all who had illustrated the Christian faith by their works, from the blessed Prince of the Apostles till his own day. His labours against the enemies of the Church we have already seen. The greatest monuments of his zeal and learning, besides his treatises on holy Scripture, are his books against Helvidius, Jovinian, Vigilantius, and Rufinus; and his *Dialogues* against the Pelagians. More than a hundred of his epistles have been preserved. The

Martyrology which is called by his name, has been proved not to have been written by him, though it is very ancient. Dacherius says that he published it from a manuscript written about the year 600¹.

Four congregations of religious bear the name of S. Jerom as their principal patron. One of these is in Spain, the others belong to Italy. They now adopt the rule of S. Austin, with a few constitutions drawn from the epistles of S. Jerom.

The peaceful star of Bethlehem
Came o'er thy solitude,
The radiance of the heavenly gem
Lit up thy sterner mood;
Yea, like a star in murky wells,
Cheering the bed where darkness dwells,
The images of earth its happier light endued.

The thought of the Eternal Child
Upon thy cloistral cell
Must sure have cast an influence mild,
And, like a holy spell,
Have peopled that far Eastern night
With dreams meet for an eremite,
Beside that cradle poor bidding the world farewell.

Cathedral, p. 297.

¹ Spicilegium, Pref. ad tom. iv.

OCTOBER.

OCTOBER 1.*S. Remigius, Bishop.*

533.

S. REMIGIUS was born in his ancestral castle of Laon in Gaul, where his father Emilius kept the state suitable to his rank. Principius, his elder brother, became bishop of Soissons, and is honoured as a saint in the Western Church, on the 25th of September. When his mother Celinia was very old, Montanus, a blind monk, foretold that she should have another son, who should be the cause of salvation to many. His prophecy was fulfilled, probably about the year 450. From his childhood Remigius was remarkable for the gravity and thoughtfulness of his demeanour, and for his tender benevolence towards all around him. He withdrew from his father's house, to seek greater retirement from the world in solitude. He spent great part of his time in prayer and mortifications and vigils. So eminent did he become in the spiritual life, that he was elected by universal consent to the vacant see of Rheims, in the twenty-

second year of his age. His rare virtues were deemed a sufficient reason for setting aside the canon in his favour.

Fortunatus, bishop of Poictou in the seventh age, and the earliest historian of his life, describes the saint in these words; "He was liberal in alms, devout in prayer, sedulous in vigils, perfect in charity, abased in humility, distinguished in doctrine, ready in speech, most holy in conversation. He showed the sincerity of his mind in the serenity of his countenance, and the gentleness of his heart in the sweetness of his discourse. He taught by deeds rather than by words." The great strength and clearness of his arguments, united to the most winning gracefulness of style, made him be deservedly thought the most eloquent man of his time. Many miracles are related to have been performed by him. On one occasion, as he was making the circuit of his diocese, he cured a blind man who was possessed by an evil spirit. At another time, the city of Rheims took fire, but was saved by his prayers. He also restored to life a young girl.

At that time, the ancient inhabitants of Gaul were fast merging in the nation of the Franks, who had come from the east of the Rhine, and had spread over a great part of Gaul, by adopting the manners and language of the aboriginal people, as well as by force of arms. Childeric, king of the Franks, dying in 486, was succeeded by his son Clovis. During a war with Syagrius, king of the Romans, the army of Clovis committed many outrages on the property of the Church. But the king himself, though a pagan, seems to have frequently restrained his followers

from these excesses. He ordered a rich vessel, which had been carried away from the church of Rheims, to be restored, at the urgent request of S. Remigius. And when the plunderer refused to part with it, he killed him with his own hand.

Clotildis, his queen, was a Christian, and earnestly desired the conversion of her lord. For a long time her lessons and prayers seemed unavailing. Her eldest son Ingomer was baptized, at her desire, but died within a week after receiving the holy sacrament. Clovis reproached the queen as the cause of his death, which he ascribed to the superstitious rite, as he deemed it. But she meekly replied, I thank my God Who has thought me worthy to bear a child whom He has called to His kingdom. Their second son also was baptized, by the name of Chlodomir. He too was at the point of death, and the king was in the utmost despair. But God granted his life to the tears of his mother. And at length it pleased Him to reward her piety by the conversion of her husband. The occasion of it is memorable.

During his wars with the Alemanni, in the year 496, his army was engaged in a desperate battle with the enemy. The day seemed irrecoverably lost, when the king cried out in an agony, O Jesu Christ, Whom Clotildis proclaims to be the Son of the living God, if Thou wilt make me victorious over my enemies, I will believe in Thee, and will be baptized in Thy Name. Fresh courage animated his army, and he gained the victory. He immediately began to prepare to fulfil his vow. He sought the aid of S. Vedast, a holy priest, who instructed him in the Christian doctrines. The queen heard of his change

with joy, and secretly sent for S. Remigius to come and receive the king into the Church. Clovis without difficulty persuaded his nobles, and many of the people, to follow his example. Three thousand of them received holy baptism with him, on Christmas-day, in the same year. This joyous event took place at Rheims, amidst circumstances of extraordinary splendour. As S. Remigius led the royal catechumen to the font, he said, Bow thy neck in meekness, O Sicambrian, adore what thou hast hitherto burnt, and burn what thou hast adored. There is a tradition that the holy oil which he used to anoint the king was miraculously provided in a sacred ampulla or vessel, which was preserved for many ages in the cathedral church of Rheims, and was used at the coronation of the kings of France.

S. Remigius, at the same time, baptized the lady Albofledis, sister of the king. She died soon afterwards, and the saint comforted her brother by a letter. Another sister of Clovis, who had fallen into the Arian heresy, renounced her errors, and was reconciled. Clovis bestowed lands upon the Church, which S. Remigius employed in founding new bishoprics, at Laon, Arras, Cambray, Tournay, and other places. Thus of all the states of modern Europe, the kingdom of the Franks was the first to embrace the religion of the Cross. And hence "the most Christian king" of France has ever borne the honourable title of Eldest son of the Church. Anastasius, Bishop of Rome, and S. Avitus of Vienne, wrote to Clovis, to express their joy at his conversion. S. Remigius was made primate of Gaul probably by

S. Symmachus, who succeeded Anastasius in the see of Rome, in 498.

When Clovis was about to march against Alaric, king of the Goths, in the beginning of the sixth century, S. Remigius wrote to him, recommending the practice of many Christian virtues. The saint devoted himself to complete the conversion of the whole nation to Christ. He received power to work many miracles in confirmation of his doctrine, and persuaded the people to destroy their idols. During his episcopate, the councils of Orleans and of Lyons assembled; the former in 511, to decide matters of discipline, and the latter in 517, to condemn the Arians.

Clovis died in 511. S. Remigius survived him many years, and on the 13th of January, 533, as it seems most probable, he passed from earth to heaven, in a good old age. He was buried, according to his own desire, in the chapel of S. Christopher at Rheims, near the altar of S. Geneviève in an adjoining oratory of S. Germanus of Auxerre, which he had built. Pilgrims soon began to flock to it, and to enrich it with their offerings. Within fifty years after his decease, a church was erected over his tomb, "S. Christopher yielding his place to his new guest," as Mabillon observes¹. When the sepulchre of S. Remigius was opened, his body was found dried but entire. It was laid under the altar of the church. Besides the sacred ampulla and other relics, a precious chalice which Clovis had given him was long

¹ Annal. Ord. Benedict. t. l. lib. iii. 17.

kept with veneration. It was at length broken up and sold for the redemption of Christian captives.

Early in the eighth century, Moderamnus, or Moderandus, bishop of Rennes, passing through Rheims on his way to Rome, carried the stole and hairshirt of the saint into Italy, and deposited them in the monastery of Bercetum.

In 852, on the 1st of October, Hincmar, bishop of Rheims, again translated the body of S. Remigius into a new crypt, and enclosed it in silver. He reared a shrine above it, which he adorned with gold and precious stones. Upon it were inscribed these lines :—

*Hoc tibi, Remigi, fabricavi, magne, sepulorum,
Hincmarus præsul, ductus amore tuo.
Ut requiem Dominus tribuat mihi, sancte, precatu,
Et dignis meritis, mi venerande, tuis.*

—This sepulchre, to thee, O great Remigius, I, Hincmar, bishop, have erected, led by love of thee. The Lord grant me rest, at thy prayer, and for thy worthy sake, O venerable saint.

In 881 the holy remains were removed to the monastery of Orbacum, beyond the Marne, for fear of the pagans. They were restored with great pomp to Rheims at Christmas, in 901. In 1049, Pope S. Leo IX. translated them into the Benedictine abbey at Rheims, which had been erected to receive them, and appointed the festival of S. Remigius to be celebrated on the 1st of October. He bestowed on the saint the title of the Apostle of the Franks. His feast was anciently kept on the 13th, and sometimes on the 15th of January. Rheims has ever since his age been the metropolitan see of France. A colle-

giate church was built there in honour of his nurse Balsamia.

Hid are the saints of God ;
Uncertified by high angelic sign,
Nor raiment soft, nor empire's golden rod
Marks them divine.
Theirs but the unbought air, earth's parent sod,
And the sun's smile benign ;—
Christ rears His throne within the secret heart,
From the haughty world apart.

Yet not all-hid from those
Who watch to see ;—'neath their dull guise of earth,
Bright bursting gleams unwittingly disclose
Their heaven-wrought birth.
Meekness, love, patience, faith's serene repose ;
And the soul's tutored mirth,
Bidding the slow heart dance, to prove her power
O'er self in its proud hour.

Lyra Apostolica, p. 66.

OCTOBER 6.

S. Faith, Virgin and Martyr.

END OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

S. FAITH was the daughter of Christian parents in Agen, a city of Aquitain, in Gaul. Her holy devotion to the King of virgin souls was rewarded with the crown of martyrdom, in the reign of Maximian the colleague of Dioclesian. She suffered probably before the general persecution in 303, and as it is generally supposed, between the years 286 and 292, which Maximian spent in Gaul. Datian was then

governor of the province. He it was who afterwards in Spain tormented the holy martyr S. Vincent. S. Faith endured with firmness a lingering torture. Many who beheld her constancy were converted to the faith, and afterwards shared her triumph. She was at length beheaded, confessing Christ with her last breath. The martyr S. Caprais is sometimes mentioned as her companion, though he is commemorated in the martyrologies on the 20th of October.

The Christians buried their bodies during the night. About the middle of the fifth age, S. Dulcinius, bishop of Agen, built a church in honour of S. Faith, and translated her relics into it. The remains of S. Caprais, and of the other martyrs who suffered at the same time, he carried into another church in the city. In the ninth century the relics of S. Vincent of Agen and of S. Faith were removed to the abbey of Conques, and in 1050 into the new church of the same house. Pope Urban V. in 1365 bestowed part of the remains of S. Faith on the monastery of Cucufat in Catalonia. An arm was formerly preserved at Glastonbury. S. Faith was chosen as the patroness of many churches in France. The Benedictine priory of Horsham in Norfolk was dedicated in her honour by Robert Fitzwalter and his wife Sybilla in 1105; and was endowed by king Henry I. A church under the invocation of S. Faith existed in London before the year 1087. In 1312, the crypt underneath the choir of S. Paul's Cathedral was set apart for it. The whole building was consumed in the fire of 1666. A chapel of the same name is used as a cemetery in the modern building.

Soft pleasure's soul-pervading influence
Ne'er unnerved thy stern purpose, weaned from sense,
To seek for worthier bridals, and, below,
The Lamb to follow wheresoe'er He go.

For the dread Virgin-born, Ineffable
In His eternal beauty, so did fill
Thy soul, that thou didst tread on earthly care,
Walking on high, nor rival thought could'st bear.

Now knowest thou that blessedness, while o'er
Heaven's multitudinous voices thine doth soar
In sweetness, singing while the Bridegroom's brow
Shines o'er thee, singing through the eternal Now.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 325.

OCTOBER 9.

S. Denys, Bishop and Martyr.

END OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

THE early history of Christianity in Gaul is involved in great uncertainty. According to some authorities, it was first preached by S. Paul, while others give the honour to Crescens, one of his disciples, or to S. Luke. S. Pothinus, the first bishop of Lyons, is supposed to have been a scholar of S. Polycarp, as S. Irenæus, his successor in the see, certainly was. Pothinus, with a noble company of Christians in Lyons and Vienne, was crowned with martyrdom in the year 177. Hence Gaul offered her first-fruits to Christ before either Africa or Spain.

After the passion of the holy Irenæus in 202, the Churches of Gaul seem to have suffered much in the persecutions of Severus and his successors. So that

even in the southern provinces, the light of faith was nearly extinguished. About the year 245, S. Fabian Bishop of Rome, taking pity on their forlorn condition, sent seven missionary bishops into Gaul, with a number of inferior clergy. They were not at first appointed to any particular sees, but received a commission to preach throughout the country. They afterwards founded the sees of Tours, Arles, Narbonne, Toulouse, Paris, Clermont, and Limoges. Among them was S. Denys or Dionysius, the future bishop of Paris. They arrived probably together, or within a short time of each other.

When S. Denys landed at Arles, he found a few Christians there, among whom he stayed for a little time, to encourage them, and, as some say, to consecrate a church. He then proceeded towards the northern provinces, attended by S. Lucian of Beauvais, S. Quintin of Amiens, S. Crispin of Soissons, and other blessed confessors. He fixed his episcopal seat at Paris, while they carried the Gospel into still more distant parts. He converted many by his discourses, and by the evidence of miracles. In the course of time a church was consecrated, and a body of clergy was ordained to its service. Bishops were sent to Chartres, Senlis, Meaux, and other places. At length the storm of persecution fell upon the infant Church, and S. Denys was enrolled among its early martyrs; SS. Rusticus and Eleutherius, his priest and archdeacon, suffered along with him. Whether this event happened in 273, during the reign of Aurelian, or seventeen years afterwards, while Maximian was in Gaul, is not certainly known. The latter date seems the more probable. The bodies of

the martyrs were ordered to be thrown into the Seine, lest the Christians should bury them with honour. But they were rescued from the hands of the soldiers by a woman, and were deposited in a secret place about six miles from Paris.

When peace was restored to the Church, the same devoted woman built a tomb over their remains. At the earnest request of S. Geneviève in the fifth age, a stately church was erected on the place, which became famed for miracles. This holy virgin had a special devotion to the memory of S. Denys, and used often to visit his tomb, even during the night. King Dagobert founded a monastery in the same place, in 629. Pepin and his son Charlemagne were liberal benefactors to it. It was rebuilt with great magnificence by the abbat Suger, prime minister of king Louis VII. in the twelfth century. The relics of the holy martyrs were long preserved in three silver shrines. In the ninth century they were twice removed, to Nogent, and to Rheims, for fear of the barbarians. Pope Stephen II. was lodged in the abbey of S. Denys, on his visit to France in the reign of Pepin, and was cured of a dangerous sickness at the tomb of the saint. Out of gratitude, he endowed the house with many privileges. The festival of S. Denys and his companions is marked in all the martyrologies, on the ninth of October. Their names are invoked in ancient litanies, and are inserted in the Canon of the Mass, in a Sacramentary of S. Martin of Tours, as it is called, but which was compiled during the reign of Charles the Bald in the ninth age.

S. Denys has ever been considered as the patron

of the kings of France. On the eve of all their expeditions, they went in state to the abbey which bears his name, to implore his assistance. And on their prosperous return, their first act was to give thanks in the same manner. The standard of S. Denys, commonly called the Oriflamme, or Auriflamme, is celebrated in mediæval history. K. Philip I., in the eleventh century, seems to have been the first who caused it to be borne before him in war. This custom lasted till the time of Charles VII., who, after the expulsion of the English from France, adopted the white banner, which has ever since been used as the royal standard ¹. The war-cry of ~~Montjoie S.~~ **Denys**, with which the kings of France animated their troops on the onset of battle, often resounded on the plains of Palestine, in the age of the Crusades.

In the middle of the thirteenth century, the remains of the kings and queens of France were gathered from all the places of their interment throughout the kingdom, and were carried to the abbey of S. Denys. Those who were descended from Charlemagne were laid on one side of the cemetery, those of the line of Hugh Capet, on the other. And the deceased sovereigns of France, during the five centuries which followed, were laid in the hallowed field of the abbey, that in death their dust might rest near the relics of their blessed patron. But when the day of the infidel Revolution arrived, not even the saintly associations of fifteen hundred years availed to protect his shrine from sacrilege; and the tombs which surrounded it shared the same fate.

¹ Memoirs of De Joinville, vol. ii. p. 159.

The very Fiend of hell himself seemed to be let loose upon the domain of the men of peace. But even the poor remains of the saints of God, and of the faithful departed in Christ, may not with impunity be trodden under the foot of the unholy. The downfall of the spoiler and the late history of the once joyous France are not needed to attest this. Our own land may furnish other examples.

S. Denys, bishop of Paris, ought not to be confounded with the Areopagite of the same name. In many copies of the English Kalendar we find the latter saint commemorated on this day. It is not unlikely that the compilers of the Kalendar considered them as one person, and the same opinion is found in the Roman Breviary. But in other parts of the Church the Areopagite is honoured as a distinct person, and by a separate festival on the 3d of October. He is supposed to have been a native of Thrace. When S. Paul visited Athens, he was a member of the court of Areopagus, the supreme tribunal of justice in that city¹. The sermon of the Apostle was the means of converting him to God. Damaris, whose name is also mentioned in the sacred history, is thought by some to have been his wife. He became the first bishop of Athens, and received the palm of martyrdom in the reign of Domitian. He is honoured on the 3d of October in the East and West. The writings which are usually ascribed to him are not of earlier date than the sixth century. His head is believed to be in the treasury of the church of Soissons, whither it was translated from Constanti-

¹ Acts xvii.

noble in 1205. Pope Innocent III., in the thirteenth century, bestowed the body of the saint on the church of S. Denys, near Paris. It had been brought into Italy from the East.

So not alone Christ's mission-crown on high
Shall gird your brows with radiance, but the urn
Of Heaven's own light in your true bosoms burn ;
For the great God who fills eternity,
Makes lowliest hearts His temple ; such we see
When to Faith's earliest morn our eyes we turn,
And round the all-conquering Cross of shame discern,
Kneeling in light, a suffering Hierarchy ;
Thence high and wide, 'mid Persecution's night,
The East and West are with their glory bright ;
As on some festal eve in glorious Rome,
Far through the pillared shades of Peter's dome,
A thousand glowing lamps fling light on high,
Making their own calm day, their own pure sky,
Around the holiest altar-cross, whence springs
The mystic dove, shaking her golden wings.

Cathedral, p. 47.

OCTOBER 13.

Translation of S. Edward, King and Confessor.

DIED 1066. TRANSLATED 1163.

“ ABOVE all other states and kingdoms upon earth, England glories in the sanctity of her kings ;” says S. Aelred, abbat of Rievaulx in Yorkshire ; “ some of them are crowned with martyrdom, and have departed from an earthly to a heavenly kingdom ; others preferring exile to their home, have chosen to

die for Christ, far from their own land. Some laying aside their crown, have submitted to monastic discipline; and others, reigning in justice and sanctity have desired to benefit rather than to command their subjects. Among whom, like a bright star, the glorious Edward shone; as the morning-star in the midst of a cloud, or like the full moon, he gave light in his days¹." His father king Ethelred ascended the throne of England in 978, on the death of S. Edward the martyr, which the wicked ambition of queen Elfrida had occasioned, in order to secure the crown for her son. Ethelred married Elfleda, and their son Edmund, surnamed Ironside, succeeded him. On her decease he espoused Emma, the daughter of Richard I., duke of Normandy; its Flower and Pearl, as she was called. The holy king Edward was the eldest of her sons.

Ethelred was not allowed to enjoy in peace the honours which had been so unjustly gained, even though he was innocent of his mother's crime. His reign was continually disturbed by incursions of the Danes; and in 1013 Sweyn king of Denmark invaded England with a large force, and leaving his fleet under the command of his son Canute, he laid waste the inland counties with fire and sword. He besieged the capital, but Ethelred with the assistance of Turkill, a Danish nobleman, resisted him so vigorously that he was obliged to retire. But his progress was checked only for a moment, and he soon made himself master of the whole country. Ethelred, finding his cause desperate, sent Emma, and her two sons Edward and Alfred, into Normandy, whither he

¹ De Vitâ et Mir. S. Edw. Conf. Prolog.

himself followed in the end of the year 1014. He was honourably received at the Norman court. The sudden death of Sweyn, within a short time after, opened a way for his return, and on the conclusion of a treaty with the English nobles he renewed the war with the Danes, at first with some success. But fresh forces arriving from Denmark, his fortunes were again brought to the verge of ruin, when death released him from his troubles in 1016. His son Edmund, queen Emma, and S. Edward, were in London with him when he expired.

The greater part of the kingdom then submitted to the Danish conqueror, but the citizens of London supported the claims of Edmund, the eldest son of Ethelred. The doubtful issue of the war was settled by their dividing the kingdom between them. But Edmund survived the partition only seven months. In 1017 he was barbarously murdered by Edric, count of Mercia, who hoped to recommend himself to Canute by removing his rival. The king was buried at Glastonbury, near the remains of his grandfather Edgar. His two sons, Edwin and Edward, were sent into Sweden, that they might be secretly put to death. But Olave the king took pity upon them, and allowed them to retire to the court of Stephen, king of Hungary, who received them with kindness. Edwin soon died; and Edward married Agatha, the sister of Stephen. Their son Atheling, and their daughters Margaret and Christina, became afterwards celebrated in British history.

In the meanwhile Canute had seized the whole kingdom; but as if to atone for this act of injustice, he punished Edric and the other murderers of K.

Edmund with death. During his long reign, he laboured unceasingly to win the favour of the English, by the wisdom of his laws, and by the liberality of his gifts to the Church. He restored to the monasteries all that his father had taken from them; and on the site of every great battle he endowed a chauntry chapel for a priest to say masses for the souls of the slain. He married the dowager queen Emma, who seems to have become estranged from her children, the sons of Ethelred. He undertook a journey to Rome in 1030; and died at Shaftesbury in 1036. His remains were buried at Winchester.

S. Edward immediately fitted out a fleet, and landed in Hampshire; but receiving no encouragement, even from his mother queen Emma, who was then at Winchester, he soon returned to Normandy. The kingdom was again divided between Hardicanute, the son of Canute and queen Emma, and Harold, surnamed Harefoot, the offspring of his former marriage. But Hardicanute remained so long in Denmark, that his brother gained possession of the whole kingdom, in 1037. Queen Emma went into exile, and Baldwin count of Flanders hospitably lodged her in his castle of Bruges. Alfred the younger brother of S. Edward was treacherously invited into England; and was made prisoner by Godwin, earl of Kent and Wessex, and after much cruel treatment was put to death at Ely.

Harold died in 1040. Hardicanute was then invited to fill the throne. His mother returned to England; and he soon after received his brother S. Edward as a guest, and provided a residence for him worthy of his rank. His death took place in

1042. The English then united their strength, and finally expelled the Danes from the country. This event was annually commemorated for many ages afterwards at Hocketide, in the third week of the Paschal season.

The nearest heir to the throne of England was Edward, sometimes called the Outlaw, the son of K. Edmund Ironside. But as he was then in a distant country, the more powerful barons, headed by earl Godwin, made choice of S. Edward as their king. His advancement to the throne had been foretold many years before, by Brithwold, abbat of Glastonbury, in the reign of Canute. His great sanctity, as well as the length of his reign, had also been revealed to the recluse. The accession of S. Edward was hailed with joy by the people. He was crowned at Winchester by Eadsius, archbishop of Canterbury, who gave him many useful lessons in the art of governing. One of his first acts was to confirm the grants of former kings to the church of Canterbury. He also deprived queen Emma of the riches which she had amassed since the death of his father. Historians attribute to his councillors the blame of his harsh treatment of his mother. Perhaps it may have been intended to prevent her from renewing her intimacy with the Danes, for whose sake she had married the enemy of her first husband, and had wholly neglected his children. Edward allowed her to enjoy her dower in seclusion at Winchester, where she died in 1052. The tales of her trial by ordeal are quite unfounded. S. Edward had not been long seated on the throne when he was threatened with an invasion from Norway, but the death of the king

relieved him from further alarm. In 1044, he married Editha, the daughter of Earl Godwin, a lady of great beauty, as the ancient chroniclers say, eminently instructed in learning, in the whole course of her life most chaste and humble; so that, according to the proverb, she was indeed a rose sprung from a thorn. "Even in her girlish years," says Aelred, "she anticipated the composure of age, and flying from public view, she was oftenest found in the secrecy of her chamber. There she was neither dissolved in idleness, nor burdensome to those around her from pride; but she was wont to read, or to work with her hands, adorning vestments with wonderful skill, and embroidering gold on silk in imitation of pictures. With such work, and with meditation, she avoided impurity, and shunned the conversation of young men. She had moreover a lovely countenance; but in the goodness of her soul she was far more beautiful." She lived with her husband, by mutual consent, as a sister with her brother.

The king gave offence to his English subjects by appointing to high offices many foreigners, whom his early life in Normandy had bound to him by ties of friendship and gratitude. Robert, abbat of Jumièges, he promoted to the see of London, and afterwards to the primacy. Leofric, also a native of France, was made a bishop, and about the year 1049 transferred his seat from Kirton or Crediton to Exeter, the king and queen assisting. The monks who lived there were removed to Westminster, and their place was filled by canons. Owing to the number of foreigners who had come over with Edward, French manners began everywhere to prevail. Many of the nobles

learned to speak the Norman language instead of their own, and French forms were adopted in deeds and legal instruments. These innovations provoked the jealousy of some of the great barons. Earl Godwin and his sons became the leaders of the discontented party, who only waited for an opportunity of asserting their rights. This was not long wanting. In 1051, Eustace, earl of Bologne, father of the renowned Godfrey, king of Jerusalem, paid a visit to S. Edward, whose sister he had married. As he passed through Dover, on his return, one of his train was killed in a fray ; and when he would have avenged his death, the citizens rose in arms, and murdered several of his followers, and chased the whole party out of the town. Edward sent orders to Godwin to go down and punish the offenders. But he evaded the king's command, and began to assemble an army, under various pretences. The king summoned to his assistance Siward, earl of Northumberland, and Leofric, of Mercia. Their united forces soon vanquished the rebel earl and his sons, who were banished from the kingdom. The queen Editha also was entrusted for a time to the care of the king's sister, the abbess of Wherwell.

William duke of Normandy had been invited to aid the king in subduing the rebellion ; but he did not arrive in England till it had been put down. And after paying a visit of ceremony to S. Edward, he returned home. In 1052, Godwin was restored to favour, and soon regained such influence with the king, that nearly all the foreigners were dismissed from their offices. Robert withdrew to his abbey at Jumièges, and Stigand succeeded him in Canterbury. The new primate was wholly unworthy of

the dignity, but the mild temper of the king was unable to resist his appointment. Godwin died suddenly in the following year. His son Harold inherited his turbulent spirit, and occasioned great disquiet to S.'Edward and the whole kingdom by his feuds with the other rival barons. In 1063, he signalized himself by subduing the principality of Wales.

During his adverse fortunes, S. Edward had made a vow to perform a devout pilgrimage to the tomb of SS. Peter and Paul at Rome; and as soon as he came to the crown he began to think of fulfilling it. He accordingly assembled the bishops and the temporal nobility, and told them of his vow, desiring them to choose some one to govern the kingdom in his absence. The grief and alarm of the assembly, and of the whole nation, at the proposal of the king were so great, that he agreed to send a deputation to Rome, to inquire if he might be released from his vow. The ambassadors found Leo IX. holding a synod in Rome, in 1049. When they represented to him the danger with which the absence of the king threatened England, the pope dispensed with the performance of his vow, and enjoined him to give to the poor all that his pilgrimage would have cost him, and to found a new monastery in honour of S. Peter, or to add to the endowments of an old one.

The king joyfully accepted these conditions, and voluntarily remitted the tax of Danegelt, which had at first been levied to defray the charges of the war with the Danes, but since their expulsion from England had enriched the royal treasury. The abbey of Westminster owed its grandeur to his pious vow. Its original foundation is probably as old as the

reign of Offa king of the Mercians in the eighth century. Some authorities say that Sebert king of the East Saxons was its first benefactor in 610, while S. Mellitus was bishop of London. In the tenth century S. Dunstan and king Edgar restored it, and placed Benedictine monks in it. S. Edward granted three charters, one of which is dated in 1049, and the others in 1066. He laid the foundation of a new church and abbey of magnificent design. A second embassy was sent to Rome, in 1060, during the pontificate of Nicholas II., to obtain the papal confirmation of the charter of the monastery. His holiness received the ambassadors with great honour, and granted many privileges to the abbey, and exemption from episcopal jurisdiction. He invested S. Edward with its guardianship and patronage. The royal charters are signed by the king and queen, the two archbishops, and ten bishops, and six of the great abbats, besides many of the nobility and high officers of state. The concluding words of one of them are worthy of special notice; "Whoever of my successors shall keep firmly and inviolably the liberty of my donation, let him be crowned with eternal clarity, and enjoy the full felicity of the heavenly kingdom. But if any, which God forefend, shall wish to destroy it, or shall prove a gainsayer, an overturner, or a violater of our decree, let him with Judas the traitor lie under eternal anathema, unless he shall make satisfaction to God and S. Peter by worthy penance."

In 1054 S. Edward sent Siward, earl of Northumberland to assist Malcolm Kanmore, king of Scotland, in his contest with the usurper Macbeth. The cause of the rightful sovereign was successful, and he

was solemnly crowned at Scone in 1057. As S. Edward felt himself growing old, he sent for his nephew Edward from Hungary. He arrived in London with his family, but did not long survive the journey. On the defeat and death of Harold at the battle of Hastings in 1066, his son Edgar Atheling was for a short time acknowledged as king by the English. But he was easily prevailed on to submit to William Duke of Normandy, and retired into private life. His sister Christina became abbess of Ramsey; and Margaret was married to Malcolm III. of Scotland. She is honoured by the Church as a glorious Saint, and as the mother of the royal confessor S. David.

Many wise laws were devised and promulgated among the English by king Edward and his councillors; though some of those which have since passed under his name, are thought to have been of later date. "These are the laws which our histories so often mention under the name of the laws of Edward the Confessor," says Blackstone; "which our ancestors struggled so hardly to maintain, under the first princes of the Norman line, and which subsequent princes so frequently promised to keep and restore, as the most popular act they could do, when pressed by foreign emergencies or domestic discontents These, in short, are the laws which gave rise and origin to that collection of maxims and customs, which is now known by the name of the Common Law¹." In another place the same great authority observes, "king Edgar projected and began what his grandson king Edward the Confessor

¹ Commentaries, Introd. sect. 3.

afterwards completed, viz. one uniform digest, or body of laws, to be observed throughout the whole kingdom; being probably no more than a revival of king Alfred's code, with some improvements suggested by necessity and experience, particularly the incorporating some of the British or rather Mercian customs, and also such of the Danish as were reasonable and approved, into the West-Saxon Lage, the code compiled by Alfred; which was still the groundwork of the whole¹."

By these laws remarkable honour and precedence were given to the persons and property of ecclesiastics. The tithe of the produce of the soil was declared to be due to God and the Church. The institution of the Truce of the king, as it was called in S. Edward's code, enjoined that from Advent Sunday till the octave of the Epiphany law-suits and prosecutions should cease; also from Septuagesima till the octave of Easter, and from Ascension day till the octave of Whitsunday. The same rule was to be observed on the three days in the Ember weeks; on all Saturdays, from the hour of none till Monday morning; and on vigils of S. Mary, S. Michael, and S. John Baptist, and of the Apostles, and other Saints, whose holy days the priest announced on the Sunday before; from the hour of none on the vigil till the morrow of the festival. The same honour was paid to the feasts of the Dedication of churches, and to the holydays of the Saints who were the patrons of each parish. At those times every one was free from arrests and from all legal penalties.

¹ Commentaries, B. iv. 33.

The *Treuga Dei*, Trêve de Dieu, or Truce of God, was probably the origin of this institution of S. Edward. It was first established by Guido, bishop of Puy, in Velai, in the end of the tenth century. The council of Clermont decreed that it should be observed during all the festivals of S. Mary and their vigils, as well as during those of the Apostles; also from the Sunday before the beginning of Lent, till sunrise on the Monday after the octave of Pentecost; and from sunset on the Wednesday before Advent till the octave of the Epiphany; and every week from sunset on Wednesday till sunrise on Monday. The fathers of the council in 1041 recommend this ordinance of peace in these words, "Receive therefore, and hold inviolate, that peace or truce which has been ordained, the mercy of God inspiring us; . . . observing the Thursday through reverence of our Lord's Ascension; the Friday, on account of His Passion; the Saturday, through veneration for His Sepulture; and the Sunday to honour His Resurrection." At the council of Soissons in 1155, K. Louis VII., of France, and many princes, solemnly swore to preserve the Truce of God inviolate. It was promulgated to his diocese by S. Ivo de Chartres, in a letter of sublimest eloquence¹. It was thus that pious princes in an age of warfare sought to gain the beatitude of the men of peace.

These were the events which marked the secular history of S. Edward's reign. If we would think of him as a saint, living indeed on earth, but with his

¹ See *Mores Catholici*, b. ix. 8.

heart in heaven, let us again listen to the abbat of Rievaulx. "The spirit of interior sanctity shone even in his body, a singular sweetness appeared in his countenance, gravity in his gait, and simplicity in his manners. His words had a certain dignity and hilarity; and, ever embalmed with the sweetness of the name of Christ and of His Blessed Mother, he appeared now awing, now soothing; at one time instructing, at another consoling." And again, "He behaved to his domestics as an equal; to priests he was most humble, and kind to the people, the fellow-sufferer of the miserable, and bountiful to the needy. Wonderful was his devotion in the worship of God, and his solicitude in repairing churches and monasteries. Even while he sat as a king on his lofty throne, decorated with gold and purple, he was still the father of orphans, and the judge of widows. His treasury seemed to be the public property of the whole world, the common chest of the poor. For the king esteemed all that he possessed, as not his own, but as belonging to all. If he was asked, he gave; when he received, he was silent; a modest receiver, a cheerful giver, who never forgot what he had received, but forthwith gave it away." God rewarded his sanctity by bestowing upon his kingdom the blessing of peace, and of freedom from foreign invasion. And even the tumults which arose at home were shortlived, and easily quelled; "which was the more remarkable," as William of Malmesbury has observed, "because the king conducted himself so mildly that he would not injure by a word even the meanest persons. He was a man for the simplicity of his manners little able to govern, but

devoted to God, and therefore directed by Him." His favourite pastimes were hunting and hawking; and in these exercises he would often spend the day, after hearing the Divine Office in the morning.

Several miraculous cures were performed upon the lame and blind, by the holy king. A young woman who was afflicted by a painful tumour in her neck was healed by his touch. This is the first instance on record of the cure of the king's evil by the royal hand. "That S. Edward cured the king's evil," says Collier, "is beyond dispute; and since the credit of this miracle is unquestionable, I see no reason why we should scruple believing the rest. He was the first that cured this distemper, and from him it has descended as an hereditary miracle upon his successors. To dispute the matter of fact is to go to the excesses of scepticism, to deny our senses, and to be incredulous even to ridiculousness. . . . The kings of England are miraculously distinguished, not only from their subjects, but from all the princes of Christendom, excepting those of France, who have a share with them in this extraordinary privilege. But the antiquity of the miracle lies on the English side; for, according to the French historians, Louis the Godly, or at most Philip II., was the first prince that pretended to cure the king's evil. Now the ancientest of these lived near two hundred years after the death of our Edward the Confessor¹."

S. Edward was on one occasion favoured with a gracious vision of his Lord, during the time of the holy Mass, which Leofric count of Mercia also saw,

¹ Eccl. Hist. b. iii. p. 226.

as he was kneeling beside him. Next to the blessed Prince of the Apostles, he had a particular devotion to S. John, the beloved disciple of the Lord. One day, as he was going in procession to assist at the dedication of a church in his honour, a poor pilgrim asked alms for the love of S. John. The king had given away all the money which he had brought with him, and not being able to call his treasurer, he took off a ring from his finger, and gave it to the poor man. It is said that the pilgrim was no other than the blessed Evangelist himself, who afterwards restored the ring to an English palmer in the Holy Land, desiring him to carry it to S. Edward, and to say that the hour of his decease was not far distant, and that the saint whom he had honoured as his patron would be waiting to conduct his soul to the presence of his Judge. The ring was long preserved in Westminster abbey. The kings of England used formerly on Good Friday to give away rings which had been blessed; and the custom has been traced to the charity of S. Edward.

In 1065, the abbey of Westminster was finished, and on the festival of Holy Innocents it was solemnly dedicated in honour of S. Peter. S. Edward was confined by illness to his chamber; but the queen took his place at the august ceremony. The court celebrated the event by entertainments and great rejoicing, which lasted for some days. But in the midst of the festivity, the end of the holy king drew near. The queen never left him, and ministered to his wants with her own hands. He lay for two days as if in a trance, or ecstasy; and on awaking, he lifted up his hands and prayed to the Lord to give him

strength to relate what had been revealed to him. For he said that two monks who had shown him kindness in his exile, and who had long since died, had appeared to him, and had foretold the calamities which the sins of the clergy and the people of England would soon bring upon the land. But in God's time, they said, relief would be given.

The abbat Aelred thus describes the blissful passage of the saint to immortality; "The king then, knowing that the hour drew near in which he should depart out of this world to Christ, desires his friends to moderate their grief, and not by unavailing sorrow to interrupt the joy which this hope gave birth to. After this manner he would say to them, 'If you loved me you would rather rejoice, because I go to my Father, to receive the reward promised to the faithful, not for my own merits, but by the grace of the Lord my Saviour, Who pitieth whom He will, and showeth mercy to whom it pleaseth Him: but do you follow your friend with your prayers, and withstand by psalms and prayers those who would oppose my passage to heaven; for although they cannot overcome the Faith of the Crucified, yet hardly any one is so perfect as that they cannot try to hinder him, or terrify him.'

"Commending the queen to her brother and her relations, he praised her great devotion to him, and proclaimed her virginity; for she who had appeared as a wife in public, had been to him as a sister, or a daughter, in private. He requested that he might be buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, which he had built from the foundation; and that his passage might be speedily made known, that the

suffrages of the people's prayers might not be delayed. All things being thus fitly arranged, the saint desired that the priests might come with the ministers of the Church ; and forthwith he strengthened his departure by receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord. Seeing the queen, among the others, weeping and sobbing more abundantly, he said, Weep not, my daughter, for I shall not die but live, and, departing from the land of the dying, I believe that I shall see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. At last, commending himself to God, in the faith of Christ, with the sacraments of Christ, in the hope of His promises, he departed from the world, an old man, and full of days ; and leaving a pure flesh, his pure spirit is united to the Father of spirits, with Him to live for ever. He died in 1066, on the day before the nones of January, having reigned twenty-three years." With him ended the line of the Saxon kings, who had filled the throne of England for nearly six centuries.

His body was wrapped in costly garments and was carried to Westminster abbey, attended by a numerous train of monks and priests, and the nobility of England. In accordance with a universal custom in those ages, a large dole was given to the poor. For the Catholic Church teaches that the souls of the faithful departed in Christ are benefited by the charity, as well as by the prayers of the living. " Without doubt," says S. Augustin of Hippo, " the dead are assisted by the prayers of holy Church, and by the healthgiving Sacrifice and alms which are offered for their spirits ; that with them God may deal more mercifully than their sins have deserved. For this has been handed down from the fathers,

and observed by the whole Church, that for those who have died in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, we pray, and commemorate them when That is offered. And when, for the sake of those who are to be commended, works of mercy are performed, who doubts that they are benefited, for whom prayers to God are not empty said ¹?" William the Conqueror enclosed the tomb of the Saint in a shrine, and enriched it with gold and silver. In 1075, queen Editha was laid near her husband, in a sepulchre which king William also erected in her memory.

The tomb of S. Edward became the scene of many miracles, and pilgrims flocked to it in great numbers. One of the most memorable of those divine interpositions is related in the life of S. Wulstan, bishop of Worcester. As soon as William of Normandy was firmly established in the throne of England, he removed from their high offices, both in the Church and in the state, all those persons whom his predecessor had appointed to fill them. Lanfranc was made archbishop of Canterbury, and summoned a council at Westminster, in which the bishops were called upon to resign their sees. When S. Wulstan was ordered, in his turn, to deliver up his ring and pastoral staff, he confessed his unworthiness to bear such an office, as he said he had done when the clergy elected him, and when his master king Edward, with the concurrence of the holy See, had appointed him. But as he had received his crosier from S. Edward, to none other would he resign it; and rising from his seat he walked to the tomb of the

¹ Serm. 172.

saint, and fixed it in the stone. He then returned and sat among the monks. But no one had the power to draw the crosier out of the stone, till he was permitted to take it again, when it yielded easily to his hand.

Thirty-six years after the burial of S. Edward, his tomb was opened, and his body was found whole and uncorrupted. In 1138, pope Innocent II. addressed an epistle to the monks of Westminster, empowering them to collect testimonies of the sanctity and miracles of their royal founder, in order that his canonization might proceed. It was finally declared by a bull of pope Alexander III., in 1161. In 1163, his body was translated by S. Thomas of Canterbury to a worthier shrine, in presence of king Henry II. The ceremony was performed on the 13th of October. On this day, he has ever since been honoured in the English martyrology, though his principal festival in the Roman kalendar is on the 5th of January, the day of his decease. The Prayer at the Mass of his translation, in the Office of Sarum, has these words; "Whom the holy translation of the blessed king Edward rejoices, let Thy grace, O Lord, make more joyful: and grant us in this Sacrifice to feel with our whole heart the sweetness of Thy presence." During the abbacy of Richard de Ware, in 1269, we read that "the xiii. day of Octobre the kynge¹ lette translate with great solempnytie the holy body of seynte Edward, kynge and confessour, that before laye in the syde of the quere, into the chapell at the back of the hygh

¹ Henry III.

aulter of Westminster abbey, and there layd it in a ryche shryne."

Pope Innocent III., in 1208, granted a bull to the abbey, in which he "remitted one year and forty days of the penance which had been enjoined them, to all who were truly penitent, and had confessed their sins, and who should come annually to the church of Westminster, on the festival of S. Edward, with a pure intention." Succeeding popes confirmed the observance of his feast, and bestowed similar indulgences on devout pilgrims. In 1444, king Henry VI. thus addressed the archbishop and clergy of Canterbury assembled in convocation; "Forasmuch as among all other saints, we trust that the blessed and glorious confessor S. Edward is a special patron and protectoure of us, and of our royaume, whereof he sometye bare the croune, whoos day of translation is kept as now double feest in holy Church only; we, for the more laude and praising of God, worship of the said glorious saint, and for thence of more devotion among Christen puple, pray and exhorte you to decree and ordeyne, by thauthorite of the said convocation, that the said day of S. Edward be kept and observed perpetually hereafter, as double feest, and holy day through al youre province; wherein ye shall do unto God right acceptable service, and to us right singular plaiser." In the next year the convocation accordingly appointed the feast of S. Edward to be solemnly observed by the people of England.

Part of the ancient building which S. Edward erected may still be seen near the east cloister and southern transept of Westminster abbey. The

present church was built chiefly in the thirteenth century, during the reign of king Henry III. Many of the sovereigns of England were great benefactors to it. Early in the sixteenth century, king Henry VII. added the chapel which bears his name. It is now used as the chapel of the knights of the Bath.

The abbey was surrendered in 1540, to K. Henry VIII., who erected it into a cathedral for the diocess of Middlesex. Thomas Thirlby held the see till the king's death. On the accession of K. Edward, the new bishopric was abolished, and more than half of the property of the abbey was seized by the Lord Protector. In 1550 "the king sent a letter," says Collier, "for the purging his library at Westminster. The persons are not named, but the business was to cull out all superstitious books, as missals, legends, and such like, and to deliver the garniture of the books, being either gold or silver, to Sir Anthony Archer. These books were many of them plated with gold and silver, and curiously embossed: this, as far as we can collect, was the superstition that destroyed them. Here avarice had a very thin disguise, and the courtiers discovered of what spirit they were, to a remarkable degree." Three years afterwards, the sacred vessels and the vestments of the church were delivered up to the king's commissioners¹. In 1556, Queen Mary restored the monks to their house, and appointed Feckenham to be their abbat. He repaired the shrine of S. Edward, as we now see it. Queen Elizabeth drove the brethren of S. Benedict once more from the abbey, and it became a collegiate church for a dean and prebendaries.

¹ See Collier, Eccl. Hist. p. ii. b. iv. pp. 307, 336.

“Though stripped of much of its internal splendour by K. Henry VIII.,” says Dugdale, “and greatly damaged in the civil wars of Charles I.’s time, it still remains among the finest monuments of ancient art which this country can furnish ; and preserves at least the outline of its former grandeur.” It is terminated towards the East by a magnificent apse which encloses the chapel of S. Edward, surrounded by ten other chauntries.

Ever since the time of S. Edward, Westminster abbey has been the usual place of the coronation of the kings of England. The chair in which the monarch sits still bears the name of the saint, as do also the crown and sceptre, and the staff, which are solemnly delivered during the ceremony. Those now used were made in imitation of the ancient, at the restoration of K. Charles II. ; for the parliament in 1642 had sold these. Heraldic antiquarians are not agreed regarding the history of the coat of arms which is commonly assigned to S. Edward ; azure, a cross patonce between five martenets or. K. Richard II., out of devotion to his memory, impaled this coat with the arms of England.

Within the enclosure of Westminster abbey, many royal and saintly dead await the trumpet of doom. Their marble effigies are said to preserve their likeness in life. K. Edward I. and his faithful queen Eleanor of Castile are there ; Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault ; Richard II. and Anne of Bohemia ; the victor of Agincourt with his queen Katharine ; and Edward V. and his brother Richard of York. Henry VII. lies in the gorgeous chapel which he reared, within a rich monument of brass. There too, we may see the tombs of queen Elizabeth,

and of queen Mary of Scotland, of James I. of England, and of Charles II. The abbats and religious of the old monastery of S. Peter were sleeping there when the changes of later ages brought desolation upon their abode of peace. And many of the flower of British chivalry have sought a grave there with the hooded monks.

Alas! that it should so often be our lot to mourn the decay of ancient piety and reverence, in the sublimest monuments of the devotion of other ages. But if we are doomed to wander in the desolate cathedral or abbey church, solitary and with sad hearts, amidst the gay throng of visitors who sport themselves where once the holy dead were wont to kneel, we cannot feel alone while their remains are so near. In each reclining figure, so humble, so melancholy, with palms so meekly joined, or hands crossed upon the breast, in silent, unceasing supplication, we seem to behold a brother in the mystical communion of the Catholic fold. If visions of the old solemnities still haunt our imagination, the stately procession, or the jubilant choir, on a Christmas or an Easter morn, we may find comfort in the thought, that those were but shadows of what is even at this hour passing around the eternal throne in the Church above. Earthly temples may decay, and their glory may pass away in evil times, but of the city of God it is written by the disciple of love, "I saw no temple there, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it."

He lived in good lyfe many a yere,
 Emporoure of grete powere,
 And wisely gan he wake.

When he dyed, for soth to say,
 He was beryed in that abbay
 That he first gan make ;
 There he lyeth in a shryne of gold,
 And doth maracles as it is tolde ;
 He maketh blynd men for to see,
 Wode men to have their wit, parde,
 Croked their cruches forsake.

Now God, that is of mythes most,
 Fader, and Sone, and Holy Gost,
 Of owre soules be faynel
 All that have herde this talkyng,
 Lytill, moche, old and yying,
 Yblyssed mote they be :
 God give them grace whan they shal ende
 To hevyn blyss their soules wende
 With angelys bryght of ble.
 Amen, pour charite.

Legend of Sir Gowghter.

OCTOBER 17.

S. Etheldreda, Virgin.

679.

S. ETHELDREDA was the third daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, and Ereswitha, sister of S. Hilda, abbess of Whitby. She was born at Exnynge, or Ixning, a town in Suffolk, and was educated by her parents in the fear of God. She was married to Tonbert, prince of the Girvii, a tribe dependent on the kingdom of Mercia, who inhabited the marshes which lay to the north of Cambridge, between the Cam and the sea. In the midst of those fens, there were many islands which were highly cultivated. The Isle of Ely was one of the largest among them, and

Tonbert bestowed it on the saint as her bridal dower. While they lived together in the bonds of holy matrimony, she prevailed on him to follow the more excellent way of virgin souls. Their angelic union was dissolved by the death of Tonbert, at the end of a few years. S. Etheldreda then retired to Ely, where she passed a long time in holy solitude. Poverty and humility she made her glory, and her nights and days were occupied in the divine praises. The fame of her sanctity could not be long concealed. It attracted the notice and love of Egfrid, the son of Oswi, king of the Northumbrians. In 660, she consented to be married to him, and left her happy retreat for the home of her husband. Oswinus, the steward of her house accompanied her ; of whom we have heard, as the humble attendant of S. Chad, in later years. She lived for twelve years in the society of Egfrid, and during that time she obtained from him the same favour as her former husband had granted to her. Hence she is called in the ancient chronicles, "Twice a widow, and always a virgin." "It cannot be doubted," says Ven. Bede, "that even in our age it may have so happened as faithful historians relate to have been often done in former ages ; one and the same Lord granting it, Who promises that He will be with us to the end of the world ¹."

In 670 Egfrid succeeded to the throne of the Northumbrians on the death of his father. His holy queen seems to have become more and more devoted to the contemplation of heavenly things, and in 672 with her husband's consent she withdrew into the monastery of Coludi, or Cawode, near

¹ Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. 19.

York ; or, as others say, not far from Berwick, and afterwards called Coldingham. She received the veil from the hands of S. Wilfrid, archbishop of York, who had advised the king to allow her to follow her vocation. She lived in that house for a year, under S. Ebba, the superior. The king is said to have repented of the permission which he had granted S. Etheldreda, and to have attempted to draw her from her convent back to his court. She thought her abode no longer safe, and fled with two attendants to Ely. With the assistance of her brother Athulf, she built a convent for nuns, and a monastery for religious brethren, on the site of an old church which K. Ethelbert had founded in the time of S. Augustin, as some say. She taught the sisters who were committed to her care the mysteries of the heavenly life, by her lessons and example. She used the coarsest garments, and abstained from all luxuries. She tasted food only once in the day, except on the high festivals of the Church. After Matins, she remained in the church, engaged in mental prayer, till the second office at sunrise, instead of retiring to take a little more rest, as her rule allowed. Her sister Sexburga, the widow of Ercombert, king of Kent, joined her community accompanied by her daughter Ermenilda, queen of the Mercians, and her granddaughter Wereburga. These three holy ladies are honoured by the Church as distinguished saints.

S. Etheldreda is believed to have been gifted with the spirit of prophecy. In the year 679, a pestilence visited the monastery, and she foretold her own decease, and the number of her religious who should fall a prey to it. A few days before her end she

was afflicted with a painful tumour in her neck, which required the assistance of a surgeon. She remarked to him that it was sent her as a penance for the vain pleasures which she had formerly taken in wearing gold and jewels on her neck. On the third day after, the 23d of June, with sweet composure she passed to eternal rest. She was laid among the departed sisters of the house, in a coffin of wood.

Sixteen years afterwards, her sister, S. Sexburga, who had succeeded her in the government of the house, desired to translate her remains into a more honourable place in the church. Her body was found uncorrupted, and lying as if asleep; and the scar of the wound in her neck was distinctly visible, as the surgeon who had attended her bore witness. Devils were cast out, and the sick were healed by approaching the holy body. The brethren and sisters stood around, singing praises to the Lord for His mercies; and with great joy they translated it into the church, where it was deposited in a coffin of white marble, on the 17th of October, 695. Within forty years afterwards Ven. Bede wrote an account of the event in his *Ecclesiastical History*. He also composed a hymn in honour of the saint, and in praise of virginity. The ancient English Church commemorated S. Etheldreda on the day of her decease as well as on this, the day of her translation. In the kalendar of Sarum the latter festival is marked in red letters, while the other is inserted in black, and is only commemorated in the Mass of the vigil of S. John Baptist.

In 870 the monastery of S. Etheldreda was destroyed by the Danish invaders; but God wonder-

fully preserved the holy remains of the virgin and her saintly relations from sacrilegious violence. After a few years, eight secular priests ventured to return, and to rebuild part of the ruined monastery. Many miracles continued to be performed at the tomb of the saint. In 970 S. Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, and K. Edgar, endowed with ample revenues a Benedictine monastery at Ely, and appointed Brithnoth the first abbat. In 974 the remains of S. Withburga, the youngest sister of S. Etheldreda, were translated thither from Derham in Norfolk. K. Canute and queen Emma were liberal benefactors to the monastery. Towards the end of the eleventh century, abbat Symeon laid the foundation of the transepts of the present cathedral church. The building was so far advanced, that on the 17th of October, 1106, abbat Richard, his successor, translated the bodies of S. Etheldreda, S. Sexburga, S. Erminilda, and S. Withburga, to a more magnificent shrine in the new church. William of Malmesbury attests their miraculous preservation in these words : "The splendour of Divine goodness, from the beginning of their faith, has shone around the people of England ; so that no where among the nations, as I think, will you find so many bodies of the saints after death undecayed, and prefiguring the appearance of the final incorruption. This has come to pass, as I believe, from above, that a nation situated almost out of the world, by beholding the incorruption of the saints, may be more animated with faith and hope of the resurrection. There are five whom I myself have known, although the inhabitants of other places claim more ; S. Etheldreda, S. Wiburga,

virgins; king Edmund; archbishop Alphege; and Cuthbert, the ancient father. These all, with skin and flesh unwasted, and joints flexible, and with a certain vital warmth, seem to wear the appearance of sleepers¹."

The change of the monastery of S. Etheldreda into a cathedral priory arose from an attempt of the bishop of Lincoln to exercise jurisdiction over it. Abbat Richard refused to acknowledge his right to do so, and privately gained the consent of K. Henry I. to erect Ely into a new see. He did not live to complete his scheme; but in 1108, the year after his death, S. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, obtained the confirmation of the new bishopric from Pope Paschal II. The immediate government of the monastery was vested in the prior, while the bishop continued to exercise the authority of the abbat. He filled his stall in the choir, and presided in the chapter when he pleased. He also had the power of appointing and removing the chief officers of the house, and of enjoining rules and ordinances for its government.

On the 17th of September, 1252, the greater part of the cathedral church being finished, it was solemnly consecrated to God in honour of S. Mary, S. Peter, and S. Etheldreda. The bodies of the saints were laid in the presbytery, at the east end. In the following century the octagonal tower and the present choir were completed. The cathedral church of Ely is remarkable for the western porch or galilee,

¹ *De gestis Reg. Angl.* lib. ii. 13.

which is peculiar to it and to the abbey church of Durham. The history of S. Etheldreda is sculptured on the pillars which support the octagonal tower and lantern at the intersection of the nave and transepts. The chapel of our Blessed Ladye was made the parish church of the Holy Trinity by the commissioners of K. Henry VIII. In 1541, the monastery of Benedictine brothers was supplanted by a dean and eight prebendaries.

The site of the ancient palace of the bishop of Ely in Holborn, was bequeathed to the see by bishop John de Kirkeby, in the end of the thirteenth century. Thomas Arundel, in the next age, built a great part of it at his own expence, before his translations to York and Canterbury. Its ruins still bear witness to the beauty of the original building. In the reign of Q. Elizabeth the ground which it stood upon passed into the possession of her favourite, Lord Chancellor Hatton, and after many changes was purchased by the crown in 1772. The crypt of the chapel is now used as a wine vault, and a tavern occupies the place of the ancient gatehouse.

S. Etheldreda is also sometimes called S. Edilrida, Ediltrudis, or Etheldrith. Her familiar name in England is S. Audrey. But for the occurrence of her festival on this day, it would have been observed on the vigil of S. Luke the Evangelist, whose feast is kept on the 18th of October.

Love is her bridal tie,
Her dower is poverty ;
'Mid earthly clouds she heavenwards springs,
And treads on human things.

Stern hardihood she wears,
And penitential tears,
With fasting girt, as with a zone,
Her heavenly race to run.

Blest they whom God above
Doth bind with cords of love ;
Them shall the heavenly Bridegroom own,
In soul and body one.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 327.

OCTOBER 25.

S. Crispin, Martyr.

288.

S. CRISPIN and his brother CRISPINIAN, were among the companions of S. Denys, the Apostle of Paris. Soissons was the scene of their labours. They instructed the people daily, as opportunity offered, in the knowledge of God ; and in imitation of the great Apostle S. Paul, they earned a livelihood by the trade of making shoes. Hence they have been considered the patron of those who follow the same calling.

During the progress of the emperor Maximian Hercules through Gaul, in the end of the third century, he came to Soissons, and hearing of the holy brothers, he commanded them to be arrested. They were brought before the governor, Rictius Varus, who after inflicting severe tortures condemned them to be beheaded. They suffered at Soissons, on the 25th of October, 288. Their names are mentioned in the old martyrologies. In the sixth cen-

ture, a great church was built at Soissons in their honour. Their shrine was enriched and beautified by S. Eligius, the holy bishop of Noyon, in the following age. In later times an abbey was dedicated to God under their invocation. If we may believe the Roman Martyrology, their relics were translated to the church of S. Laurence in Rome. But Tillemont asserts, with much more probability, that they were preserved, in his age, in the abbey of Notre Dame at Soissons.

“From the example of the saints, it appears how foolish the pretences of many Christians are, who imagine the care of a family, the business of a farm or shop, the attention which they are obliged to give to their worldly profession, are impediments which excuse them from aiming at perfection,” as the pious author of the *Lives of the Saints* observes. “Such indeed they make them; but this is altogether owing to their own sloth and malice. How many saints have made these very employments the means of their perfection! S. Paul made tents; SS. Crispin and Crispinian were shoemakers; the Blessed Virgin was taken up in the care of her poor cottage; Christ Himself worked with His reputed father; and those saints who renounced all commerce with the world to devote themselves totally to the contemplation of heavenly things, made mats, tilled the earth, and copied and bound good books. The secret of their sanctification was, that, fulfilling the maxims of Christ, they studied to subdue their passions and die to themselves; they with much earnestness and application obtained of God, and improved daily in their souls, a spirit of devotion and of prayer; their

temporal business they regarded as a duty which they owed to God, and sanctified it by a pure and perfect intention, as Christ on earth directed every thing He did to the glory of His Father. In these very employments they were careful to improve themselves in humility, meekness, resignation, divine charity, and all other virtues, by the occasions which call them forth at every moment, and in every action. Opportunities of every virtue and every kind of good work never fail in all circumstances, and the chief means of our sanctification may be practised in every state of life, which are self-denial and assiduous prayer, frequent aspirations, and pious meditation or reflections on spiritual truths, which disengage the affections from earthly things, and deeply imprint in the heart those of piety and religion."

There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart,
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

Christian Year, p. 346.

NOVEMBER.

NOVEMBER 6.*S. Leonard, Confessor.*

559.

S. LEONARD was a French nobleman at the court of Clovis. He was converted to the true faith by S. Remigius; and renouncing the world, he devoted himself to the instructions of the holy bishop. The king entreated him to return to court; but as he desired a life of penance and contemplation, he retired to the monastery of Micy, not far from Orleans. It was then governed by S. Maximin or Mesmin, whose name was afterwards given to it. S. Leonard there assumed the religious habit, and practised spiritual discipline under the care of S. Lætus, a holy monk of the house. His brother, S. Lifard, had also followed his example, and founded a monastery at Meun, which became a collegiate church of canons.

S. Leonard aspired to the life of more perfect solitude, and obtained leave from his superior to depart. He travelled through Berri, converting many hea-

then as he went along. On his arrival at Limousin, he chose for his retreat a forest at a little distance from Limoges. There he built an oratory, in a place called Nobiliac. His food was wild herbs and fruits. And except when he sometimes visited the neighbouring churches, he had no witness of his devotion but God alone. His fame began to be known, and the hearts of many were filled with ardent longings after the same life of heavenly communion. His hermitage soon became a flourishing monastery. In later years it was called in honour of its founder S. Leonard de Noblat. The king bestowed on it a great part of the forest which lay around it.

Even before he retired to Micy, S. Leonard was remarkable for his charity towards captives and prisoners. His labours for their corporal and spiritual relief were unwearying; and throughout his life they continued to be the chief objects of his care. Some of them were even miraculously delivered from their chains by his prayers. The king granted him the privilege of setting some at liberty. This was a prerogative not unfrequently bestowed on holy bishops and men of mercy in those ages.

S. Leonard also applied himself to bring prisoners to a sense of their guilt, and to lead them to contrition and penance. For he considered the deliverance of their souls from the chain of sin no less an act of charity than the release of their bodies. After many years spent in the service of his heavenly Master, his labours were crowned by a happy death, in the year 559. The monastery which he had founded was for many ages exempted from public burdens and exactions, and enjoyed other privileges. His

name is honoured with great devotion in many other parts of France. It was formerly no less celebrated in England. The synod of Worcester, in 1240, appointed his festival to be observed by attendance at Mass, and by abstaining from all work except the labour of the plough. His sanctity has been attested by miracles, and his name was often invoked in favour of prisoners.

Many confraternities were established in the ages of faith for the redemption of captives and the relief of prisoners. The most distinguished of these was the Order of the Mathurine or Trinitarian Friars, founded by S. John de Matha and S. Felix de Valois, about the year 1197, and confirmed by pope Innocent III. They adopted the rule of S. Austin, with some constitutions of their own. A third part of their revenues was devoted to the poor, another third to the redemption of Christian captives, and the remaining share sufficed for their own maintenance. They were brought into England in 1224, and possessed about twelve houses in it at the dissolution, and thirteen in Scotland. Their habit was white, and from the red cross which they wore on their breast, they were sometimes called Red Friars; a name which was also given to the Knights of the Temple.

Where the influence of the ancient faith incites to the same heroic charity, such institutions are still numerous. One of the most remarkable is the Confraternità de' Bianchi at Naples, so called from the colour of its habit. It is dedicated to our Blessed Ladye, under the title *Sancta Maria succurre miseris*. It is composed of the highest in rank and dignity among

the city clergy, including the cardinal archbishop and the apostolic nuncio. Since its foundation about three hundred years ago, it has numbered among its brethren four popes, and more than twenty cardinals, and six members of the sacred college are now enrolled among them. And several of the brethren have been added to the catalogue of saints.

“The great object of this confraternity,” says a late writer, “like that of S. Giovanni Decollato at Rome, is the care of criminals who are condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law. The moment sentence of death is passed upon the prisoner, the members of the congregation take the place of the ordinary spiritual directors of the prison, and with unwearied vigilance watch, to the very last hour, every opportunity of instilling holy thoughts into his troubled mind, inspiring confidence, or calming despair; exciting or confirming the disposition to repentance, or directing him, if already repentant, in the reparation of the injuries which have been the consequence of his crimes. And in order to relieve his mind more completely from the earthly cares which burden it in his last hours, the confraternity charges itself with the care of all those for whom the criminal is bound to provide, and who stand in need of his assistance or protection. The parents of the unhappy man are secured against want; if he leaves a wife, she is placed in a safe and honourable asylum, whence if she desires to marry a second time, she receives a considerable dower. A similar provision is made for his children.

“In addition to their care for condemned criminals, the Bianchi brethren also provide for poor and un-

friended debtors and prisoners confined for lesser offences ; paying the debts of the more meritorious among them, administering suitable advice and instruction to those whom it is possible to reclaim, and taking every means to recall them from the ways of crime. No difficulty disheartens their holy zeal, no repulse, though accompanied by insult and even violence, damps their resolution ; and the prayers offered up without intermission by the brethren, especially at the altar, cannot fail to bring a blessing upon the labours of the community. By the people of Naples they are held in the highest veneration, and even in the prisons the most profligate and abandoned will uncover as a brother of the Bianchi passes by."

Doubtless there are persons who calculate their charities by a different rule, and who will condemn the mercy of such confraternities, as in their opinion an encouragement to crime. But they who have been trained in the school of Christ have learned otherwise. His approving sentence at the day of doom outweighs every other consideration, and they find an answer to each specious objection in His own words, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ; for I was in prison and ye visited Me."

In lands where the hearts of the people have been estranged from the Catholic Church, their charities, like their faith, are without unity or well-directed aim. Yet the efforts of single persons, and even of small societies, are often worthy of the zeal of earlier times. No one can mention the name of Howard, the friend of prisoners, without breathing a prayer that the errors of his faith may be forgiven him, for

the sake of the inextinguishable love for the miserable and the guilty, which attested the presence of that "charity which covers a multitude of sins."

The Fourth appointed to his office was

Poore prisoners to relieve with gracious ayd,
And captives to redeeme with price of bras,
From Turkes and Sarazins, which them had stayd ;
And though they faulty were, yet well he wayd
That God to us forgiveth every howre
Much more then that why they in bands were layd ;
And He that harrowed hell with heavie stowre

The faulty soules from thence brought to His heavenly bowre.

Faërie Queene, b. i. c. 10.

NOVEMBER 11.

S. Martin, Bishop and Confessor.

397.

S. MARTIN, the Apostle of Gaul, was born at Saboraria, a town in Pannonia, on the borders of Hungary, in the year 316, or 317. His parents removed during his infancy to Pavia, where he was educated. Though they were pagans, he was inclined from his earliest years towards the Christian faith, and when he was ten years old he was admitted as a catechumen of the Church, much against their will. At the age of twelve, his fondest wish was to retire into the desert, to serve God in solitude. His father was a military tribune in the army of Constantine, and wished him to follow the same profession. And an order having been issued to

enlist the sons of veterans, his name was given in, and he was compelled to take the military oath, when he was fifteen years of age. Even in the life of a soldier, he endeavoured to imitate the humility and poverty of the monks. He was attended only by one servant, whom he treated as his equal, and often performed for him the meanest offices. S. Martin was preserved from the vices common to the army; and his patience, and lowliness, and extraordinary charity endeared him to his comrades. He kept only so much of his pay as was necessary for his daily wants; the rest he gave to the poor. One day, during a winter so severe that many had died of cold, he met at the gate of Amiens a poor man miserably clad, who had in vain implored the pity of the passers by. S. Martin had given away everything that he had, except his clothes and arms; so drawing his sword, he cut his cloak in two, and gave half to the beggar. His friends ridiculed his appearance; but on the following night he saw in a vision the Lord Jesus standing by, covered with the part of the cloak which he had given to the poor man, and heard Him say to the angels who attended Him, "Martin, yet a catechumen, hath clothed me in this garment."

He resolved immediately to seek for baptism, and received it, when he was eighteen years old. He remained for two years longer in the army, at the entreaty of his tribune, who lived in great intimacy with him, and had promised to renounce the world as soon as his time of service should expire. At last S. Martin took an opportunity of soliciting his discharge, but the emperor reproached him with fear, as a general engagement was expected on the following

day. He replied that he would appear unarmed at the head of his troop of horse, and, protected by the sign of the Cross alone, would penetrate without fear into the ranks of the enemy. And he would have fulfilled his promise, if the enemy had not sent proposals of peace. He then received his discharge.

We know nothing of his history during the next few years, till the appointment of S. Hilary to the see of Poitiers, which happened about the year 350. Soon after that, S. Martin was attracted by his fame, and went to live at Poitiers, that he might be near him. S. Hilary wished to ordain him deacon, but he felt himself so unworthy, that he would only consent to be made an exorcist. He was directed in a dream to go and visit his parents, and S. Hilary gave him leave, on condition that he would return to Poitiers. On his journey, he was waylaid by robbers, who threatened his life. As one of them stood over him with a drawn sword in his hand, he was so astonished by the unflinching courage of the saint, that he threw away his weapon, and embraced the Christian faith. S. Martin had the joy of seeing his mother and many of his countrymen converted to God, but his father remained a pagan. He boldly withstood the Arians, who were then very powerful in Illyria. They treated him with great severity, and even beat him with rods, and drove him out of their towns. As he was returning through Italy, in 356, he heard that the Church of Gaul was in the lowest state of depression, and that S. Hilary was in exile. He therefore retired into the neighbourhood of Milan, and led a life of seclusion from the world. But Auxentius, the Arian bishop of Milan, perse-

cuted him so relentlessly for his profession of the Nicene faith, that he was forced to leave Italy. He found a retreat with a priest of great sanctity in the island of Gallenaire, off the coast of Liguria, near Albenga. He lived on roots, and once narrowly escaped from being poisoned by a quantity of hellebore which he had eaten carelessly. But he was saved by earnest prayer.

In 360, the news of the return of S. Hilary to Gaul filled him with joy. He went first to Rome in hopes of meeting him there, but finding that the bishop had already passed, he followed him, and overtook him on the road to Poitiers. Soon after this, he established a monastery near the city ; the first house of religion that was known in Gaul. It was governed probably by the rule of the Egyptian ascetics. There he devoted himself to a life of sanctity and continual prayer ; and ere long he became renowned for the glory of his miracles. They are attested by eyewitnesses, whose names are venerated by the Church ; particularly by his disciple S. Sulpicius Severus, who has written his life, and by S. Gregory of Tours, who has recorded the wonders which he witnessed at his tomb, nearly two centuries after his death. The monastery near Poitiers was the scene of one of the most memorable of his miracles. One of his disciples was a catechumen, whom he was preparing for baptism. During the absence of S. Martin, he was seized with fever, and when the saint returned at the end of three days, he was dead. Martin put every one out of his cell, and shut himself in alone with the body. Like the prophet Elisha, he stretched himself upon it, and remained for a long time in

prayer; he then rose up, and awaited the issue with confidence. After two hours, the limbs of the dead man began to move, and he opened his eyes. He was immediately baptized, and lived for many years. At another time S. Martin restored to life a slave who had hanged himself.

About this time the see of Tours became vacant. It had been founded by S. Gatian, one of the companions of S. Dionysius of Paris, in the third century. After his death, it remained vacant for nearly forty years. S. Litorius, who then succeeded, after governing it for thirty-three years, died in 372. The fame of S. Martin made the people very desirous to have him for their bishop. But knowing the difficulty of drawing him from his monastery, they had recourse to stratagem. Ruritus, a citizen, pretended that his wife was sick, and throwing himself on his knees besought the saint to come and see her. The people were waiting without in crowds to receive him. When he came to Tours, he found the city filled with vast multitudes who had flocked to the election, from the country around, and from many of the neighbouring towns. A small number of persons, including a few bishops, deemed him unworthy of the episcopate, for they were displeased with the meanness of his appearance, his uncombed hair, and his poor dress. But the people regarded these things as rather in his praise, and he was chosen by acclamation. This event is commemorated in the kalendars and martyrologies on the 4th of July, the festival of his translation.

S. Martin preserved the same humility and simplicity in his new office, without at all lessening its

authority. One who knew him well has thus described him :—"No one ever saw him angry, or moved, or grieving, or laughing; he was ever one and the same, exhibiting in his countenance a heavenly joy. He seemed above the nature of a man. Never was there anything in his countenance but Christ; nor in his heart, but piety, peace, and mercy¹." He lived at first in a cell near the church; but he was so much disturbed by continual visits, that he built a monastery about two miles from the city. It was afterwards called *Majus monasterium*, and more lately by corruption, Marmoutier. The place was then a desert. On one side it was shut in by a high and steep rock; and on the other, by the river Loire; and the only entrance was by a narrow path. Some of the brethren lived in cells of wood, and others in holes which they had dug in the rock. They soon increased in number to eighty. In governing them, S. Martin imitated the example of his blessed Master, and was indeed among them as one that served. None of them had any property of their own: their only occupation was writing, which the younger brethren alone practised, the elders giving themselves up to continual prayer. They rarely left their cells, except to assemble in the oratory. They took their daily meal together towards evening, when the hour of fasting was past. Except when they were sick, they never used wine. Most of them were clothed in coarse camlet, and it was deemed a breach of discipline to be attired delicately. Many nobles

¹ Sulp. Sev. de Vitâ B. Mar.

might be found among them, who had once lived in luxury. The community soon became a nursery of bishops, for at that time there was no church in Gaul which did not desire to have a pastor from the monastery of S. Martin. After the arrival of S. Maurus in France, it adopted the rule of S. Benedict, and was flourishing in the middle of the ninth century, when the Norman barbarians overthrew it: it was restored in the end of the same century, and was united to the congregation of S. Maur in 1637. In the middle ages its brethren were renowned for the extraordinary devotion and charity with which they assisted the dying in their passage.

Soon after his consecration, S. Martin went to the court of the emperor Valentinian, at Treves, on an errand of mercy. The emperor, hearing that he was coming to ask what he had determined not to grant, gave orders that he should not be allowed to enter the palace. The empress Justina was an Arian, and therefore little inclined to honour the saint. After he had been foiled once or twice in his attempts to gain an audience, he had recourse to his usual arms. He clothed himself in sackcloth sprinkled with ashes, and abstained from food, praying night and day. On the seventh day he was encouraged by an angel, who bade him go boldly to the palace: he instantly obeyed, and found the gates open, and no one to oppose his entrance. When the emperor saw him coming, he demanded angrily why his orders had not been obeyed, and refused to rise to do honour to the bishop; but at last, overcome by a manifestation of the divine will, he embraced the saint, and granted all that he had come to ask, before

he had made his request. He frequently gave him an audience, and invited him to his table; and when he was going away, he offered him rich presents, which S. Martin refused, being bound by the vow of holy poverty.

S. Martin ever paid the highest honour to the memory and the relics of departed saints. He translated the remains of S. Gatian into the church which S. Litorius had built at Tours. But he was no less careful that those only should be honoured whose sanctity was undoubted. In the neighbourhood of Tours there was a little oratory, which inclosed the tomb of a martyr, as it was thought. S. Martin was dissatisfied with the evidence of the tradition, and abstained from worshipping at the place. He was afterwards miraculously assured that it was the burying-place of a notorious robber, who had been executed for his crimes. The power of enrolling one of the faithful departed among the saints belonged in early ages to every bishop; but, in order to prevent such an error as that which S. Martin detected, it was reserved to the Bishop of Rome alone, during the pontificate of Alexander III. in the twelfth century. Pope Innocent III., in the beginning of the following age, confirmed the decree of his predecessor.

The holy bishop of Tours demolished with his own hands many idol temples, and cut down the trees which the pagans deemed sacred. His life was often endangered by the violence of the inhabitants. Once, when he wished to destroy a pine which grew near a heathen temple, the people would only permit him on condition that he would allow it to fall

on himself: as it descended, he made the sign of the Cross, and escaped unharmed. The whole multitude eagerly demanded to be received as catechumens. At another time, when he was overthrowing a temple near Autun, the peasants attacked him, and one, more furious than the rest, was on the point of killing him, when he was suddenly seized with fear, and, throwing himself on the ground, entreated pardon of the saint. The people were sometimes persuaded by him to break their idols in pieces with their own hands. He found a great part of Gaul pagan, and left it full of churches and religious retreats; for wherever he overthrew a temple, he built an oratory or a monastery.

Innumerable miracles continued to accompany his prayers and labours. At Treves he cured a paralytic woman who was just expiring, by putting a little blessed oil into her mouth. As he passed through Paris, he met a leper, whose loathsome appearance filled every one who saw him with horror. Martin kissed him, and gave him his blessing, and on the morrow the poor man returned public thanks to God for his cure. Demons were cast out by the exorcism of the saint; threads drawn from his garments healed the sick, and a woman was cured of a fever by laying a letter of his upon her breast. S. Paulinus of Nola recovered from a disease in one of his eyes by his touch. He was often favoured with visions of angels, and of the Blessed Mother of God, and of the saints. His constancy was also sometimes tried by apparitions of the enemy of man, whom he always put to flight by prayer and the sign of the Cross. Sulpicius Severus thus re-

lates the most remarkable of these appearances:—
 “On a certain day, surrounded by a purple light, that he might the more easily deceive him by the clearness of his assumed splendour, clothed in a royal robe, and encircled with a diadem of gems and gold, his sandals covered with gold, and with a serene countenance and joyful mien, so that he might be thought like nothing less than what he was, the devil stood by Martin as he was praying in his cell. Then the devil first began: “Acknowledge, O Martin, him whom thou seest. I am Christ, about to descend to the earth, and I have willed to manifest myself first to thee.” Upon this Martin was silent, and returned no answer; but the devil dared to repeat his bold profession: “Martin, why dost thou hesitate to believe, when thou seest? I am Christ.” Then the Spirit revealing it to him, so that he understood that it was the devil, and not God, he said, “The Lord Jesus foretold not that He would come in purple, and resplendent with a diadem: I will not believe that Christ is come, except in that habit, and in the form in which He suffered, unless He show the marks of the Cross.” At this word he vanished instantly, like smoke, and filled the cell with so foul an odour, as to leave undoubted proof that he was the devil. This I had from Martin’s own lips, lest any deem it fabulous¹.”

In 383, the emperor Gratian was murdered by the soldiers, and Maximus obtained the empire, and fixed his capital at Treves. S. Martin went thither again, to beg for mercy for some unhappy criminals.

¹ Lib. de Vitâ B. Mar.

S. Ambrose arrived there at the same time, as ambassador from the younger Valentinian. The fate of the Priscillianists was then undecided; for they had appealed from the council of Bourdeaux to the emperor, and were then at Treves, awaiting their trial. Ithacius, their chief accuser, was urging the emperor to severe measures. He was unworthy of the episcopal office which he held, and was so abandoned to ease and self-indulgence, that any one who fasted or studied much he immediately accused of being a follower of Priscillian. S. Martin never ceased to condemn his conduct, and laboured to stop the prosecution. He besought Maximus not to shed the blood of the guilty persons; alleging that it was enough that they had been declared heretics by a sentence of the bishops, and had been driven from their churches; and that it was without example that an ecclesiastical cause should be tried by a secular judge: Ithacius accused him of heresy; but his influence with Maximus was so great, that while he remained at Treves sentence was deferred, and when he was about to leave it, he obtained a promise from the emperor that no blood should be shed. But as soon as he was gone, the party of Ithacius recovered their influence, and Evodius, the pretorian prefect, was appointed to try the cause. Priscillian confessed his scandalous life and doctrines, and was shortly after executed with two clerks, a laic, and a woman, the accomplices in his excesses.

S. Martin again visited Treves, in 387, at the same time that S. Ambrose was there on his second embassy from Milan. They both refused to communicate with Maximus, for they considered that he

was stained with the blood of his master Gratian, and of the murdered Priscillianists. While many were paying their court to him by flattery and base compliances, S. Martin preserved his apostolical authority, even though he had many favours to ask. He would not eat with Maximus, saying that he could not sit at table with a man who had deprived one sovereign of his crown, and another of his life. The emperor assured him that he had been forced by the soldiers against his will to accept the empire, and that none of his enemies had died except in battle. S. Martin yielded to these reasons and entreaties, for the sake of those for whom he had come to plead. Maximus was overjoyed, and invited to a feast all the great men of his court. The bishop had a seat next his own, and the priest who attended him was placed between two nobles of the highest rank. In the middle of the repast, an officer, according to custom, presented the cup to the emperor, who ordered it to be first offered to S. Martin, and expected to receive it from his hand. But when the bishop had tasted it, he sent it to his priest, as the next in rank in the company. Maximus and his whole court admired the action, and it was reported throughout the palace that S. Martin had done, at the emperor's table, what no other bishop had ventured to do in the house of an ordinary judge. He had many conversations with the emperor on the present and future life, and the eternal glory of the saints. And he predicted to him that if he invaded Italy, as he was preparing to do, he should be at first successful, but should finally perish.

The empress was never weary of listening to his

holy discourse. She sat on the floor, at his feet, and seemed unable to leave him. She invited him to a feast in her turn; but his modesty and humility could with great difficulty be overcome. At last the simple faith of the devoted lady touched his heart, and he bethought him of the prisoners whom he had to deliver, the exiles to recall, and the confiscated goods to restore, and he gave his consent. She prepared his food with her own hands, and would not sit at table with him, but was content to serve him. She placed a seat for him, gave him water to wash, and stood at a distance in the humble posture of a handmaid. When the repast was ended, she gathered up even the smallest crumbs, and preserved them with the greatest care. When his mission to Treves was accomplished he returned home.

Ithacius was not content with the death of Priscillian and his principal supporters, but he persuaded Maximus to send tribunes into Spain, with unlimited authority to search for heretics, and to punish them with the loss of goods and of life. A number of the Gallican bishops had come to Treves, to assist in filling up the vacant see, and they all communicated with him, and espoused his cause, except Theognostus. They had just gained the permission of the emperor to send the commissioners into Spain, when they were alarmed by the news that S. Martin was coming to Treves. This was his fourth and last journey, to beg the lives of two noblemen, who had forfeited them in the cause of Gratian, and to intercede for the Priscillianists. At the request of the bishops, Maximus sent to forbid him to enter the city, unless he would preserve peace with his

brethren. He replied that he would keep the peace of the Lord Jesus. He entered by night, and went to the church to pray; and the next day he presented himself at the palace. Maximus received him with respect, but put off granting his petition for a few days. Meanwhile the bishops, seeing that S. Martin kept aloof from their communion, represented to the emperor that their reputation was at an end if the obstinacy of Theognostus was encouraged by the authority of Martin. They said that he ought not to have been allowed to come into the city; and that they had gained nothing by the death of Priscillian, if the bishop of Tours became his avenger. They threw themselves at the emperor's feet, and conjured him with tears to employ force against him.

But Maximus dared not use violence towards the saint, though he was attached to the cause of the bishops. He took him aside, and mildly argued with him that the heretics had been justly condemned by a sentence of the bishops, and that he had no good reason for refusing to communicate with Ithacius; he said that Theognostus alone opposed him, and that a council, only a few days before, had pronounced him innocent of any crime. S. Martin was unmoved by any of these reasons, and the emperor left him in great anger, and issued orders for the instant execution of the persons for whom he had interceded. The news reached the saint late at night. He flew to the palace, and promised to communicate with the Ithacians on the next day, if the lives of the condemned were spared, and if the tribunes were recalled from Spain. Maximus granted all that he asked.

On the morrow, Felix, the new bishop of Treves was consecrated, and S. Martin, for that day only, joined in communion with the friends of Ithacius. But in spite of all their efforts he would not sign the deed of consecration, as a token of communion. He left Treves suddenly, on the following day, groaning within himself as he went along for the share which he had taken, against his will, in that criminal communion. He lingered for a little while in a wood, near Echternach in Luxembourg, to allow his companions to go on before. And while he was dwelling in his mind on all the melancholy circumstances which had happened, an angel stood beside him, and said, "Thou art deservedly grieved, but thou couldst not otherwise escape. Repair thy fortitude, resume thy constancy, lest thou endanger not thy glory only, but thy salvation." From that time he carefully avoided the communion of the Ithacians. And during the remaining years of his life, he was never seen at any council or assembly of bishops. And he would sometimes confess to his disciples, with tears, that he felt a diminution of his miraculous power over the possessed ever after that unhappy day.

The year of his decease is variously stated ; but it most probably happened in 397. He had foretold its approach for a long time before. Hearing that there were dissensions among the clergy of Cande, in the extremity of his diocess, he went himself to compose them, attended by a great number of his disciples. Let Sulpicius Severus relate the rest. "Having stayed a little while in that town, and restored peace among the clergy, he bethought him of

returning to his monastery ; but his strength of body suddenly began to leave him ; and calling his disciples, he told them that he was departing. Then sorrow and grief burst forth from all, and one voice of wailing ; ‘ Why dost thou desert us, father ? or to whom wilt thou leave us desolate ? Ravening wolves will invade thy flock ; and who will keep them from devouring us, when our shepherd is struck down ? We know, indeed, that thou desirest to be with Christ, but thy reward is sure, and if it is delayed, it will not be diminished. Have pity then rather on us whom thou art leaving.’ He then, moved by these tears, so that his tender mercies in the Lord overflowed, fell a weeping, and turning to the Lord, he answered his sorrowing disciples, ‘ Lord, if I am still necessary to Thy people, I refuse not the labour. Thy will be done.’ Thus placed between hope and fear, he was in doubt which he would rather ; for he was neither willing to leave us, nor to be longer separated from Christ. Yet renouncing his own wish, and leaving it not to his own pleasure, he committed himself to the decision and the power of God. . . .

“ When he had now lain in fever for some days, yet he ceased not from the work of God. All night, in prayer and vigils, he compelled his fainting body to serve the spirit, on that noble bed, lying in sackcloth and ashes. And when he was asked by his disciples to allow at least a little straw to be put under him : ‘ It becomes not a Christian, my children,’ he said, ‘ to die except in ashes. If I leave you any other example, I have sinned.’ His eyes and hands were ever directed towards

heaven; and he released not his unconquered spirit from prayer. When he was asked by the priests, who were gathered around him, to relieve his poor body by changing to one side, he replied, 'Suffer me, suffer me, my brethren, to look on heaven, rather than on earth; that my spirit, now about to go on its journey to God, may be shown the way.' Having thus spoken, he saw the devil standing near. 'Why standest thou here, thou cruel beast?' he said; 'thou shalt find nothing in me, O wicked one. The bosom of Abraham shall receive me.' With this word, he yielded up his spirit to heaven, deeply meditating on the works of God; and those who were there bore witness to us, that they saw in his lifeless body the glory of a glorified man. His face shone more brightly than the light, and his other members not one stain dimmed¹." He passed at midnight, on Sunday, the 8th of November. The circumstances of his burial and translations are related on the festival which commemorates them. The 11th of November, which is now observed as his principal feast, was probably the day on which the funeral train arrived at Tours. His disciple, S. Sulpicius Severus, had a vision of his bliss within a few days after his decease, and before the news of it had reached him. The holy bishop left no writings behind him; his life was a daily homily on the law of Christ.

His fame soon spread over the whole Church. The place where he died, as well as his tomb, was the scene of miracles. Bona remarks, that he is the

¹ Sulp. Sev. Epist. iii. *ad Basulam*.

first confessor who was honoured with a public festival; that distinction being reserved, in the earliest ages, for the martyrs, and those who had suffered bodily torments for Christ¹. In the Missal of S. Gregory his festival is celebrated on the 11th of November, with a Preface, and his name occurs in the prayer *Communicantes*, after SS. Cosmas and Damian, with others in this order, "Hilary, Martin, Augustin, Gregory, Hierome, Benedict, and all Saints." In the present Canon, this prayer mentions by name only the Blessed Virgin Mary, the twelve Apostles, and as many holy martyrs immediately connected with Rome, and "all Saints." A church existed in Rome under the invocation of S. Martin in 500. When S. Augustin arrived at Canterbury, he found a church there dedicated in his honour, which had been built before the Romans left Britain, in the middle of the fifth century. In the same age, an Arian king of Gallicia, in Spain, became a Catholic, out of gratitude for the restoration of his son to health by a relic of S. Martin. One of the homilies of S. Bernard of Clairvaux was delivered on his festival. The council of Maçon, in 581, decreed that the feast of Advent should begin on the day after his festival, and should last till Christmas. This rule prevailed in France, till the time of Charlemagne; and in the churches of Spain, which followed the Mozarabic rite. In the British churches also, Advent anciently lasted for forty days, as Ven. Bede testifies². Hence this penitential season was sometimes called S. Martin's Lent. At Milan, the

¹ Rer. Liturg. lib. i. 15. ii. 12.

² Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 27.

first Sunday in Advent is still the next after the feast of S. Martin. The name of the saint is still given to one of the principal quarter-days in Scotland, which falls on the 15th of November.

Fair camp in arms of peaceful fortitude,
And no ungentle warfare, in one band
Together knit of holy brotherhood,—

One faith, one hope, one Leader, sternly trained,
Far from earth's noise, to learn the eternal song,
And gain the conquest of a heavenly land.

By prayer, and holy plaints which heaven's gate throng,
And discipline of penitential days,
The flesh is weakened, but the soul is strong.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 310.

NOVEMBER 13.

S. Britius, Bishop.

444.

S. BRITIUS was a native of Tours, and of humble birth. He was educated in the monastery of Marmoutier, under the watchful care of the blessed Martin; but in his youth his wayward levity gave much offence to the brethren. Nevertheless, S. Martin, foreseeing his future sanctity, ordained him deacon and priest, and foretold that he should be his successor in the see of Tours. For a time his ordination seemed only to increase his pride and wilfulness. He was not indeed guilty of any open vice, but he polluted his soul by the love of the world. Though he had been originally poor, he

began to purchase horses and slaves, and other things ill suited to his holy office. On one occasion, when S. Martin reproved him for a fault, he poured forth a torrent of abuse, which the saint meekly bore, for he saw that he was for the time possessed by an evil spirit. He delivered the erring youth from its power by his prayers. Some persons urged S. Martin to depose him, but his prophetic eye beheld a coming change, and he refused. "O truly blessed man," cries S. Sulpicius Severus, "in whom guile was not; judging no one, condemning no one, rendering to no one evil for evil. Such patience had he assumed against all injuries, that when he was the bishop he was wounded with impunity, and did not on that account remove the offenders from their places, nor cast them from his charity."

At length the heart of Britius was touched, and he bitterly lamented his former course of life. S. Martin comforted him, but predicted that he should be purified by suffering. Prayer and devout contemplation then became the employment of his life. On the decease of S. Martin, the people of Tours elected him in his stead, though some of the clergy opposed him. He built a chapel over the remains of his indulgent father, which soon became celebrated for miracles.

But the temporal debt which was due to the justice of God for the offences of his youth still remained unpaid. He was at first harassed by frequent accusations, which were successfully refuted before councils of the bishops: but about the year 430 he was charged with a violation of chastity, and though his innocence was attested by miracles, he

was obliged to leave Tours, and another was chosen to fill the see. He retired to Rome, and appealed to Coelestin, who pronounced him innocent of the crime. Seven years he passed in exile, bewailing his early sins with many tears, and confessing that his punishment was just. When his penance was accomplished, God interfered in his behalf. Sixtus III. confirmed the sentence of Coelestin, and sent him back to Tours, with letters of recommendation. In the meanwhile his successor had died, and Armentius, who had come after him, also deceased as Britius was on his way to Tours. Nothing then remained to oppose his return. He lived in peace for seven years longer, and in 444 he slept in the Lord. His body was laid near the remains of S. Martin, in the chapel which he had built. About thirty years after his death his festival was first observed, on the 13th of November. His name occurs in nearly all the martyrologies.

The feast of S. Britius, in 1002, is memorable for the general massacre of the Danes, which was made by the command of King Ethelred. Gunhilda, the sister of Sweyn, with her husband and children, was among the victims. She foretold the vengeance which would fall on the authors of such cruelty.

In the history of this holy bishop we behold a glorious example of the mercy of God, which can raise the fallen to the companionship of the saints. Wondrous is the grace which flows from the Cross of Christ, through the appointed channel of salutary penitence; but for the erring and the lapsed there lies no return to baptismal innocence and higher sanctity, except through tears, and mortification,

and bitter self-reproach. "Turn ye to Me, saith the Lord, with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning." And when the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, he went out and wept bitterly. "Alas! confusion of face covereth me," such must be the language of the penitent; "O accursed pride, from which my destruction took its beginning, with my whole soul I abominate and shudder at thee, and execrate thee, as the Stygian pool of so many evils. Never more will I think, or do, or say anything, which may savour of elation of mind. And you, O contempt, and injuries, and shame, band together and rush in upon me as towards a goal, and avenge the despite which I have offered to God¹." And, again, S. Bernard remarks, "Against the consciousness of sin, the remedy of confession has been appointed: and all things are washed away in confession. Behold, these are the things which cleanse the eye of the heart, prayer and confession²."

Judge of Justice, Thee, I pray,
Grant me pardon while I may,
Ere that awful reckoning Day.

O'er my crimes I guilty groan,
Blush to think what I have done;
Spare thy suppliant, Holy One.

Thou didst set th' adulteress free,
Heardst the thief upon the tree,
And hast given hope even to me.

Suppliant, fallen, low I bend,
My bruised heart to ashes rend,
Care Thou, Lord, for my last end.

Dies Iræ.

¹ Exercit. Spir. S. Ignatii Loyolæ. Dies ii. auct. Bellecio.

² In fest. Om. Sanct. Serm. i.

NOVEMBER 15.

S. Machutus, Bishop.

564, or 565.

S. MACHUTUS, called also Maclovius, or Maclou, was the son of a Welsh nobleman. He was born in the valley of Llancarvan, in Glamorganshire, about the end of the fifth century. He was baptized and educated in the Christian Faith by S. Brendan, who had come over from Ireland, and then lived in a monastery in the same valley in which Machutus was born. From his childhood his sanctity is said to have been attested by many miracles. There seems to be little foundation for the report of his having been elected to the bishopric of Godmanchester, in Huntingdonshire, which some historians of his life mention. During the confusion which attended the insurrection of Mordred against his uncle, King Arthur, towards the middle of the sixth age, S. Machutus retired into Brittany, then a favourite place of resort for holy religious. He landed in an island where Aaron, a devout ascetic, lived in angelic purity and contemplation with a few disciples. Machutus was admitted into their society, and after a time he was sent by his superior to preach among the pagans who lived on the opposite coast. He discharged this duty with unwearied zeal, and about the year 541, he was elected bishop of the infant church of Aleth. On the death of Aaron, he succeeded him in the government of the monastery. He invited the clergy of Aleth to join the community, and thus increased it to seventy brethren.

The *Gallican Martyrologe*, quoted by Cressy, celebrates his remarkable piety, in these words; "S. Machutus being exalted to the dignity of a bishop, shed forth abundantly the beams of that divine grace with which he was replenished, illustrating men's souls with the true knowledge of God, inflaming them with His love, and affording them both admonitions and examples of all virtues: to which likewise he added a great efficacy by wonderful operations and miracles. Insomuch, as since the Apostles' time we read not of any one who wrought greater wonders in the name of Christ than he: for with his word he calmed tempests; three dead persons he restored to life; to the blind he gave sight; by the sprinkling of holy water he expelled devils; and quenched the poison of serpents.

"Neither was it in regard of miracles only that this holy bishop was like unto those princes of our Faith, but he resembled them in his patience, which was oftentimes put to the trial; for he was assaulted by certain impious persons, and suffered many calamities for justice and religion, insomuch as in the end he was violently thrust out of his episcopal throne and diocess, together with seven other devout persons, whom he had chosen for his especial companions, and who imitated him in purity of living: yet this so heavy a cross he bore after our Lord with a courageous mind, as the Apostles heretofore did¹."

The holy bishop with his companions fled to Saintes, in Aquitain, where S. Leontius the archbishop received him with great kindness. He fre-

¹ Church History of Brittany, b. xi. 29.

quently asked his advice in the government of his see, and took him with him on his journeys to distant parts of his diocese, that he might have the assistance of the prayers and holy example of his guest. Machutus was not unmindful, in his exile, of his own rebellious children, but daily implored the divine mercy to visit them and dispose them to penitence. His prayers were heard, and he was permitted once again to give them his benediction.

As he was on his way to Saintes, to renew his friendship with Leontius, he was overtaken by mortal illness, and gave up his soul to Christ, lying on sackcloth and ashes, on the 15th of November, 564, or, as some say, in the following year. The see of Aleth was afterwards removed to the town of S. Malo, which bears his name, and his body was translated thither. For fear of the Danes, as the Parisian Breviary informs us, his relics were in later years removed to Paris.

Not by the martyr's death alone
The martyr's crown in heaven is won ;
There is a triumph robe on high
For bloodless fields of victory.

What though not taught the flame to feel,
The lion den, the torturing wheel ;
Himself his only enemy,
He learns a living death to die.

What though nor executioner,
Nor scourge, nor stake, nor chains be there,
To those prepared with Christ to die
'Tis all supplied with charity.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 315.

NOVEMBER 17.

S. Hugh, Bishop.

1200.

S. HUGH was born of a noble family in Burgundy, in 1140. His mother died when he was eight years old, and his father then retired from the world into a house of regular canons near his castle, and dedicated the child to the service of God in the same house. Hugh was entrusted to the care of an aged brother, who instructed him in divine and human learning. He was ordained deacon at the age of nineteen.

About the same time, his superior took him with him to the Great Chartreuse, near Grenoble, the first house of the Carthusian order. It had been founded by S. Bruno of Cologne in 1084. Its discipline is severer than that of any other religious order, and hence it is one of the least numerous. S. Hugh was so attracted by the mortified life of the solitaries, that he secretly resolved to join their community. The canons among whom he had made his profession in vain attempted to keep him from his purpose. He escaped from the house, and was admitted into the Chartreuse, by Basil the prior. The life of the monks was an unceasing warfare with earthly desires. They wore the coarsest garments, and underneath, a shirt of hair. They abstained from flesh meat, even in sickness, and tasted food only once in the day, except during the octaves of some of the great festivals. The greater part of their time was passed in

their cells, in prayer, and contemplation, and in transcribing books. They took their food in solitude ; and assembled in choir on Sundays and holy-days only, at all the hours of the divine Office, except complin. On other days, they met only at matins and lauds and vespers. For the holy Mass was not offered daily, but only on Sundays and festivals. No one was ever allowed to leave enclosure, except the prior and the procurator, on the affairs of the house.

Such was the life of S. Hugh at the age of twenty. In his austerities, he exceeded even that strict rule. After he had remained for some time in the house, he was asked by a venerable monk, if he desired to receive the order of a priest. He answered joyfully that it was the dearest wish of his heart. But the old man reminded him how many devout men had trembled to take upon them so awful a function. S. Hugh immediately threw himself on the ground, and confessed his unworthiness, with many tears. The father, seeing that his eagerness arose not from presumption, but from an ardent longing to offer the immaculate Victim, assured him that his desire would shortly be fulfilled, and that he should afterwards be advanced to the dignity of a bishop.

At the end of ten years, he was made procurator of the monastery, and the fame of his sanctity spread throughout France, and was not unknown in England. In 1181, King Henry II. founded the first Carthusian monastery in Britain, at Witham in Somersetshire. But the first two priors had failed to overcome the difficulties which beset the new order. The king therefore sent messengers to the Great Char-

treuse, to request that S. Hugh might be appointed to govern it. Notwithstanding his entreaties, he was commanded to accept the office; and shortly after arrived in England. He soon established discipline among the brethren, and won the good opinion of those who lived near the monastery, by his simplicity and meekness. He assisted with his own hands in carrying stones and mortar to finish the buildings. Under his care the little community increased rapidly. The king used sometimes to turn aside from hunting, to converse with the holy prior.

The see of Lincoln had been for many years vacant, and king Henry, in 1186, resolved that a bishop should be appointed. It had been translated by Remigius, about the year 1086, from Dorchester in Oxfordshire, where S. Birinus had founded a cathedral church in 635, with the assistance of the kings of Northumbria and Wessex. At the death of S. Birinus, it included the kingdoms of the Mercians and West Saxons in its jurisdiction; but in later times it had been subdivided into the sees of Winchester, Salisbury, Exeter, Bath and Wells, Lichfield, Worcester, and Hereford. Henry summoned the dean and chapter to Evesham, and directed them to choose a bishop. After long deliberation, they elected the prior of Witham, to the great joy of the king. The archbishop of Canterbury confirmed their choice, and deputies were sent to the monastery to inform S. Hugh of the event. But he would on no account accept the dignity, protesting his own unworthiness, and that the election had not been made by the free choice of the chapter; and, above all, that he had no leave from his superior,

the prior of the Great Chartreuse. The chapter assembled again at Lincoln, and elected him anew, and they obtained the permission and even the command of the prior, that he should submit to their choice. He was accordingly conducted to London, and was consecrated in the chapel of S. Katharine in Westminster abbey, on the festival of S. Matthew, 1186.

He gathered around him men of wisdom and prudence, to advise him on the affairs of his see ; and he appointed none to the care of his flock, but clerks of a quiet and modest spirit, however highly recommended others might be, by their interest or learning. He was a father to the poor of his diocese, and often cast over them the shield of the Church, to protect them from the oppressor. He often visited the hospitals of lepers, whom he regarded with the tenderest pity. When some one reminded him that S. Martin had cured a leper by a kiss, he replied, The kiss of Martin healed the leper's body, but their kiss heals my soul. The forest laws were then rigorously enforced by the king and the great barons. A clerk had been seized for some slight offence against them, and had been heavily fined. S. Hugh, after citing the king's rangers in the usual form, excommunicated the principal forester. The king remonstrated in vain. And soon after when he sent to request that a vacant benefice in the diocese of Lincoln might be given to one of his dependents, S. Hugh refused, saying that ecclesiastical benefices were not for courtiers, but for churchmen ; that the king had wherewithal to reward his servants, and that the ministers of the Highest King must not be

deprived of their rights. Henry was enraged, and reproached him with ingratitude, but he was immovable. And finally, in an interview which he had with the king, he convinced him of the justice of what he had done. The forester was subjected to a severe penance before he received absolution.

In 1189, king Henry died, and was succeeded by his son king Richard I. Being in great want of money for the support of a war with France, he commissioned the archbishop of Canterbury to assemble the prelates, and to levy a tax upon the goods of the Church. When S. Hugh perceived how grievously it would oppress the poor, he refused to give his consent; but only one other bishop had the courage to join him in opposing it. The king, hearing of their refusal, gave orders that the heaviest penalties should be inflicted upon them, and that they should be utterly ruined. The goods of the other bishop were confiscated, and he was banished from the kingdom. His constancy failed him, and he went to the camp of Richard and humbly implored pardon, promising never again to thwart the royal will. But the holy monk of Lincoln, who in the solitudes of the Charteuse had gained the mastery over himself, "was unshaken by the wind of earthly fear." As the soldiers approached, to execute the orders of the king, he commanded that they should be excommunicated in all the parishes around Lincoln, with the sound of bells. This sentence terrified them so much, that they departed, without venturing to touch any thing that belonged to the bishop. For others who had been laid under the doom of anathema by S. Hugh, for their crimes, had been visibly delivered over

to Satan, and had died the death of the reprobate.

But the saint, fearing from the temper of the king that a severer punishment might be in store for his innocent people, went himself to court, to defend his own conduct. Some of his friends went to meet him, and entreated him to yield; for they remembered the calamities which had befallen the nation, owing to the murder of the blessed S. Thomas of Canterbury, about twenty years before, and they dreaded the consequences of his unbending resolution. When he arrived at the palace he found the king at Mass, and went immediately to him, and constrained him, almost by force, to embrace him, to the wonder of all present. When the *Pax*¹, or symbol of peace, was offered to Richard, he desired that it should be carried first to S. Hugh, as a token of reconciliation. It was remarked, that he soon afterwards gained a signal victory over his enemies, as a reward for the honour which he paid to the holy bishop. After Mass was ended, S. Hugh took the king aside, and remonstrated with him on his manner of life, and made him solemnly promise to amend it.

¹ While the purity and fervour of early times lasted, the kiss of peace was exchanged by the faithful, before the communion in the holy Mass. But when simplicity had degenerated into evil, the kiss was by degrees done away; and instead of it, a small tablet, or disc, with the image of the Cross, or of Christ, upon it, was offered to each. It was usually of gold or silver, richly chased and enamelled; and it was called the *Pax*, and by later writers the *Osculatorium*. The *Pax* is not given on the Thursday and Friday in Holy Week, nor in Masses for the dead.—See *Bonæ Rer. Liturg. lib. ii. c. xvi. 7.*

When he was gone, Richard said, If all bishops were such as he, kings and princes would have nothing against them. From his singular power in subduing the spirit of kings, the saint has been called *Regum Malleus*.

Richard set out on his crusade to the holy sepulchre in 1190. In the following year, S. Hugh made a visitation of all the monasteries in his diocese. When he came to the nunnery of Godestow, between Oxford and Woodstock, he found in the choir of the church a splendid tomb, adorned with silk hangings, and lighted with lamps and waxen tapers. It was the burial place of Rosamond, the paramour of king Henry II., for whose sake he had enriched the house. The bishop ordered it to be removed to a less honourable place, without the church; for he said it was a scandal to religion, and a bad example to others.

S. Hugh began to rebuild his cathedral church on the magnificent plan which we now see. Remigius had founded the original church soon after the translation of the see to Lincoln, and it was consecrated a few days after his death in 1092, by his successor Robert Bloet, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The design of S. Hugh was completed by bishop Grosteste, and the present cathedral was finished about the end of the thirteenth century.

The devotion with which S. Hugh recited his daily office was very remarkable. Once, when he was on a journey, news was brought that unless a certain place were passed immediately, he would be exposed to very great danger. But he would not leave the house till he had finished his office. He

retired every year to the monastery at Witham, for a few days, during which he lived as one of the brethren, with no other distinction than the episcopal ring. He frequently sent to Rome, to beseech the pope to release him from the cares of his see, but his request was always refused, and he was even rebuked for his importunity. In 1194, pope Celestin appointed him with two other churchmen, to examine the accusations which had been brought against Geoffrey, archbishop of York. The bishops of the kingdom assembled at York, in the same year, and passed many acts relating to discipline. In the next year the archbishop was suspended.

King John succeeded to the throne on the death of his brother, in 1199. A peace was agreed on between the kings of France and England, and S. Hugh went into Normandy to arrange its terms. He then visited the Great Chartreuse, and on his return home, as he was spending a few days in a monastery of the order, a brother asked him what news he brought of the peace with England. S. Hugh replied, that though a bishop must sometimes hear and repeat news, yet a monk ought never to busy himself with such earthly thoughts.

As the saint passed through London, in the year 1200, he was overtaken by his last illness. The disease increasing, he would often pray aloud, and say, O merciful God, grant me rest; O good Lord, the true God, at last grant me rest. Some one, who stood near, said to him, Soon, my lord, thou shalt rest. He replied, Truly blessed are they to whom in the last day of judgment rest undisturbed shall be given. The other answering that, by the will of

God, that would be the day of judgment in which he should depart from this life, he said with confidence, Thou thinkest wrongly; for that will be a day not of judgment, but of grace and mercy, in which I shall finish my life. His whole time was given to prayer, and he often sought the assistance of the Blessed Mary, his angel guardian, and the saints. When he was reminded to make his will, he left all that he had to the poor of his Church. He received the last unction on the anniversary of his consecration; but he lived for nearly two months longer.

On the 17th of November, feeling his strength rapidly going, he called for the monks and clerks, and desired them to bury his body at Lincoln. Towards evening, seeing his dear children weeping around him, he tried to comfort them with sweet and heavenly discourse. Laying his hand on the head of each, he commended them all to God and to the word of His grace. At last his voice failed, and they prayed him to entreat the Lord to send him a fit successor. God grant one to you, he said. The pavement was then strewed with blessed ashes, in the form of a cross, and the office of Complin was begun. While they were singing the verse, *Clamabit ad Me, et ego exaudiam eum: cum ipso sum in tribulatione; eripiam eum, et glorificabo eum*¹:—He shall call upon me, and I will hear him; yea, I am with him in trouble, I will deliver him and bring him to honour;—he desired them to lay him in the ashes, and they stood around him till the psalms were ended. And he with a most placid countenance,

¹ Psalm xci. 15. Eng. Ps.

gave up his soul into the hands of his Creator, and passed to the Sabbath of eternal rest, as they intoned the Cantic of Simeon, *Nunc dimittis servum Tuum, Domine, secundum verbum Tuum, in pace*¹. Thus could a monk and a bishop die.

His body shone with a pure and bright light. It was borne to Lincoln as he had desired, and the train of mourners arrived there in five days. The members of a great council, which was then assembled at Lincoln, went out to the gates to meet it, and to assist at the obsequies. Among them were three archbishops, fourteen bishops, above a hundred abbats, the king of England, and king William of Scotland. The body of the saint was laid in the cathedral church, near the altar of S. John Baptist. His sanctity was proved by the evidence of many miracles. In 1219, Pope Honorius III. appointed Stephen archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Coventry, and the abbat of Fountains, to investigate their truth, that he might be enrolled among the saints. The ceremony of his canonization took place in the year 1220. In 1222, his body was translated into a more honourable place, at the back of the high altar. His shrine is thus described in the inventory of the cathedral church of Lincoln:—*“Imprimis*—One great feretrum, silver and gilt, with one cross aisle, and one steeple in the middle, and one cross in the top, with twenty pinnacles, and an image of our Ladye in one end, and an image of S. Hugh in the other end, having in length half yard and one inch; and it is set in table of wood, and

¹ Baronius, Ann.

a thing in the middle to put in the sacrament, when it is borne, weighing 341 ounces, the gift of John Wellborne, treasurer." A shrine of richer material was afterwards made, for we read that, at the execution of the royal commission to seize the goods of the church, in June, 1540, "there were at that time two shrines in the cathedral church; the one of pure gold, called S. Hugh's shrine, standing on the back of the high altar: the place is easily to be known by the irons yet fastened in the pavement stones there. The other, called S. John of Dalderby his shrine, was of pure silver, standing in the south end of the great cross aisle¹." Some are of opinion that one of these shrines of S. Hugh contained the relics of a Christian child of that name, who was nailed to a cross by the Jews of Lincoln, on Friday, the 27th of August, 1255, in contempt of Christ and His Passion. "The perfidious Jews," says the *English Martyrologe*, "when he was dead, buried his body in an obscure place, which the earth miraculously cast up; and then they threw him into a well, who being there also by a miracle found out by his owne mother, the canons of the same city with great veneration carried the same in procession to the cathedral church or minster, and there interred his holy reliques, in the yeare of Christ 1255, and in the reign of King Henry III. of England²." Chaucer has commemorated this event in his *Canterbury Tales*³.

The inventory of the treasury of the cathedral

¹ Monast. Anglic.

² p. 205.

³ *Prioresses Tale*. See also *Percy Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, Series i. Book i. 3.

church of Lincoln still enables us to judge of the riches which were offered at the shrine of S. Hugh. It occupies thirteen folio pages, printed in double columns, in the *Monasticon Anglicanum*. We learn that, in the year 1540, "there were taken out of the said cathedral church in gold 2621 ounces, in silver 4285, besides a number of pearls and precious stones of great value, as diamonds, sapphires, rubies, carbuncles, and other gems." In ancient days, the city of Lincoln possessed four monasteries, one college, five hospitals, and five houses of friars, besides fifty-two churches.

There were nine houses of the Carthusian order in England at the dissolution, and one in Scotland. The nuns of this order never came to Britain. They have only five convents in the world, in the Netherlands. The dress of the brethren is white, with a black cloak. They obtained the name of Carthusians from the desert of the Chartreuse, where their founder established his first house. In England it was afterwards corrupted into Charter-house.

He too is blest, whose outward eye
The graceful lines of art may trace,
While his free spirit, soaring high,
Discerns the glorious from the base ;
Till out of dust his magic raise
A home for prayer and love, and full harmonious praise,

Where far away and high above,
In maze on maze the tranced sight
Strays, mindful of that heavenly love
Which knows no end in depth or height,
While the strong breath of Music seems
To waft us ever on, soaring in blissful dreams.

Love on the Saviour's dying head
Her spikenard drops unblamed may pour,
May mount His Cross, and wrap Him dead
In spices from the golden shore ;
Risen, may embalm His sacred Name
With all a painter's art, and all a minstrel's flame.

Christian Year, p. 64.

NOVEMBER 20.

S. Edmund, King and Martyr.

870.

S. EDMUND was born in the year 841. His father Alkmund was descended from the kings of East Anglia, which was then a tributary province of the West Saxons. He is said by some historians to have fled with his wife Siwara, the mother of S. Edmund, from the cruelty of Quendreda, queen of the Mercians, and to have taken refuge in Saxony. During his exile, Edmund was born. In the fourteenth year of his age, the young prince took possession of the throne of East Anglia, with the permission of Ethelwolf, king of Wessex. He was crowned by Humbert, bishop of Helmham, and chose him for his spiritual director. His first and principal care was to restore the churches and monasteries which had suffered in the late wars with the Mercians. The historians of that age have given a beauteous picture of the saintly virtues of the young king, of his tender regard for the poor and the friendless, and of his ardent devotion to the service of God. "Already the saint showed forth in his countenance what was after-

wards manifested by the divine will," such is the testimony of Asserius; "for the boy with his whole ability trod the path of virtue, which the divine goodness foreknew would end in martyrdom." And again, "He tempered with the simplicity of the dove the wisdom of the serpent." He employed his hours of leisure during a whole year in learning the psalter by heart.

When he had reigned about fourteen years, an invasion of the Danish sea-kings, Ingvar and Hubba, brought ruin on many parts of England. They came to avenge the death of Lodbrog their father, which had happened some years before. Yorkshire and Northumbria first felt their fury, and when they had laid them waste, they passed into Lincolnshire, burning and destroying everything that came in their way. The sanctity of churches and monasteries was no protection from their violence. As they approached the abbey of Croyland, the younger monks escaped, but the elders of the house and the boys awaited their coming in the church, and perished in its ruins. The abbeys of Thorney, Peterborough, Huntingdon, and Ely, with many others were totally destroyed.

The force of the East Angles was unable to resist the savage Northmen. But S. Edmund refused to comply with the terms which they offered, which demanded half of his treasure, and that he should become subject to the Danes. Matthew of Westminster relates that he gave them battle near Thetford, and that though neither side was victorious, the holy king would not consent to renew the fight; for he was unwilling in a hopeless resistance to shed the blood of his people, and the fate of the pagans who

... of the Saviour's dying head
Her shroud with arms unclasp'd
His mourn His cross, and wrap
It round from the golden shore
Lower may contain His sacred N
With all a nation's art, and all a min-

Christmas Year p. 64.

NOVEMBER 20.

S. Edmund, King and

870.

S. EDMUND was born in the year
Alkmund was descended from the
Anglia, which was then a tributary
West Saxons. He is said by some
fled with his wife Siwara, the moth-
from the cruelty of Quendreda, que-
years, and to have taken refuge in
his exile Edmund was born. In the
of his age the young prince took
from the Anglia with the por-
was king of Wessex. He was
was married to his daughter, and the
with Edmund. His reign and pro-

... the ... with the ...
... of the ... given a ...
... of the ... and the ...
... to the ...
... the ...

wards manifested by the dramatic testimony of Assensio. "The great ability trod the path of wisdom," he foreknew would end in death again. "He trembled with the wisdom of the eternal life of leisure during a whole year by heart."

When he had respect some hundred years, in
invasion of the Danes—Saxons, Angles and Huns
brought ruin on many parts of England. They came
to avenge the death of Lodowig their father, who
had happened some years before. Yorkshire
Northumbria first felt their fury, and when they had
laid them waste, they passed into Lincolnshire
burning and destroying everything that came in their
way. The sanctity of churches and monasteries was
no protection from their violence. As they approached
the abbey of Ely, the younger monks escaped
but the elders of the house and the boys withstood
their coming in the church, and perished in the conflagration.
The abbey of Thorney, Peterborough, Huntingdon
and Ely, with many others, were burnt to the ground.

The force of the East Angles was only temporary of the people
the savage Northerners. But the East Angles were not
comply with the terms which the Northerners had
demanded. And the Northerners were not
become subject to the East Angles. The East Angles
saw that the Northerners were not
and the Northerners were not

had fallen filled his soul with horror. He withdrew towards the castle of Framlingham, and retiring with some of his followers into a church at Heglesduna or Hoxne, on the Wavenley, "he threw aside his temporal arms, and put on heavenly; humbly imploring the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit to grant him constancy in his passion."

The Danes surrounded the church, and dragged him forth, and after renewing their offers in vain, they tied him to a tree, and beat him cruelly with whips. They then pierced him with darts and arrows, and at last cut off his head, on the 20th of November, 870. He never ceased to call on God, and to confess the name of Christ. Humbert was admitted to share the glory of his death. The body of the king was secretly carried away by his Christian subjects. The pagans after heaping indignities on his head, cast it into an impenetrable thicket in the forest, where it was miraculously discovered about a year afterwards. The Christians laid it in the humble oratory of wood which they had built over his body.

In the year 903, the holy body was found uncorrupted, and was translated to Bedericsworthe, where Sigebert, King of the East Angles, had laid aside his crown, and had founded a monastery in 633. Its name was changed to Edmundstowe in honour of the saint—Stow signifying a station. It was called in later years Saint Edmundsbury or Bury Saint Edmunds. The church of wood which at first covered his remains was served by seculars; and in 925 K. Athelstan is said to have endowed a college there for twenty prebendaries. The place soon became famous for miracles; and early in the eleventh century, the

body of the saint was removed for safety to London, on the approach of the Danes. It lay for three years in the church of S. Gregory, and was then restored to Bury. Within a few years afterwards, Sweyn, king of Denmark, plundered the church of S. Edmund ; but he soon fell a victim to his sacrilege. His son Canute, in 1020, made amends for his crime, and founded a Benedictine monastery at Bury. The monks were brought from Ely, and from Hulme in Norfolk. In the same year Ailwin, bishop of Helmham, removed the wooden church and laid the foundation of a worthier building, which was finished in twelve years, and on the festival of S. Luke, 1032, was solemnly dedicated to Christ, S. Mary, and S. Edmund. Canute made an offering of his crown at the shrine. Ailwin granted to the abbey an exemption from his episcopal jurisdiction, within the circuit of a mile round the church. In 1095 abbat Baldwin translated into a new church of stone the body of the saint, still entire, where it rested for many ages. Abbat Sampson in 1198 attested its incorruption in the presence of many of the convent.

Great privileges were granted to the abbey of Bury S. Edmunds by many of the popes ; and among others, the liberty of celebrating the Divine Offices, with closed doors, and without bells, during a general interdict. Many of the kings of England made devout pilgrimages to the shrine of S. Edmund and enriched it with their offerings. S. Edward the Confessor used to perform the last mile of his journey thither on foot, like a common pilgrim. K. Richard I. visited it before he set out on his crusade. K. John also often went to the abbey, and gave ten marks

annually to repair the shrine. K. Henry VI. had a great devotion to S. Edmund, and the happiest days of his life were those which he passed in retreat in the abbey. A visit which he paid to it in 1433 is thus described by an eye-witness ; " As soon as the day of the king's coming dawned, the aldermen and burgesses arrayed in scarlet, and the citizens in coarser stuff of a red colour, to the number of five hundred horsemen, went out to meet him on the plain of Newmarket, upon the vigil of the Nativity of our Lord. Going before the royal company in a line which reached the length of a mile, they conducted the king into the precincts of the monastery, between the great gate and the south entrance. For the deformity of the ruinous bell-tower and the insecurity of the stones prevented them from entering by it. There the king was embraced by the Earl of Warwick, and descended from his palfrey ; and turning towards the company, arrayed in a silken cloak, he knelt to adore the image of the cross. The whole of the brethren of the monastery received him with all the solemnities of a procession, standing around in precious copes, and the venerable fathers, the bishop of Norwich and the abbat, both vested pontifically, solemnly censed him ; and blessed water was sprinkled upon him by the hand of the abbat, who brought the cross to the king to kiss. The procession then moved on to the high altar, singing the antiphon *Ave Rex gentis Anglorum*, uttering notes of sweetest harmony, accompanied by the organs. The solemnities being finished, and prayers said at the shrine to God and S. Edmund, the king returned special thanks to the abbat for the expenses and the

benefits which he had bestowed on his company, and when he had finished, he passed into the palace with his nobles."

On the feast of the Nativity high Mass was sung, and the same procession was again marshalled, in which the king walked in his royal robes. He remained in the palace till the feast of the Epiphany; he then removed to the lodgings of the prior, and enjoyed the pastime of hunting till the 23d of January. The rest of the time, till the Purification, he passed at Elmeswell, a manor of the abbat, and returned to the abbey, where he stayed till after the Pasch. On the eve of his departure, he was enrolled, with many of his chief nobility, in the fraternity of the monks, for the love which he cherished for S. Edmund; and bidding them farewell, he commended himself and his family to God and S. Edmund, and to the prayers of the abbat and his brethren¹.

The superior of the abbey was a mitred prelate, and had a seat in parliament. In the magnificence of its buildings it seems to have been equal to any in England. Leland, the antiquarian, visited it only a few years before its destruction, and has preserved a picture of its splendour in these words:—"The sun hath not seene either a citie more finely seated, (so delicately standeth it upon the easie ascent or hanging of an hill, and a little river runneth downe on the east side thereof,) or a goodlier abbey;

¹ *Archæologia*, vol. xv. p. 67. K. Henry VI. would have been canonized but for the "Reformation." In some old English kalendars his name is inserted on the 22nd of May. I have seen a bede-roll which contains prayers to him.

whether a man indifferently consider either the endowment with revenues, or the largeness, or the incomparable magnificence thereof. A man that saw the abbey would say verily it were a citie, so many gates there are in it, and some of brasse, so many towers, and a most stately church; upon which attend three others also standing gloriously in one and the same churchyard; all of passing fine and curious workmanship¹." In allusion to the life and passion of S. Edmund, the abbey bore, as its coat armour, azure three crowns or, each pierced with two arrows in saltier of the second.

When its revenues were seized by the royal commissioners, the abbat and some of his monks received a small annual pension. The report of the men who were entrusted with the work of destruction thus related to Cromwell the progress which they made:—"Pleaseth it your lordship to be advertised that wee have been at Saynt Edmonds Bury, where we found a riche shryne, which was very cumberous to deface. We have taken in the said monasterye in gold and sylver five thousand marks and above, and over and besyds as well a rich crosse with emeredds, as also dyvers and sundry stones of great value."

Two towers still remain to bear witness to the glory of the ancient house. The churches of S. Mary and S. James stand within the cemetery. Part of the old enclosure is now used as a botanical garden.

The feast of S. Edmund was enjoined as a holiday of precept by the council of Oxford in 1222, but was

¹ Weaver's *Funeral Monuments*, p. 722.

omitted in the constitutions of archbishop Islip in 1362, who retrenched some of the festivals.

Ye holy ones departed be around ;
Like incense are your memories ; do ye not
Hear our poor prayers ascend,
And hearing them, rejoice !

Your dear remains have moulder'd to their dust ;
Long since committed to the sorrowing grave ;
But from behind the veil
Your presence breathes around.

Your ashes, which beneath our altars lie,
Breathe a deep spell, divinely eloquent,
To heal the heart-sick soul,
And bid bad spirits flee.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 268.

NOVEMBER 22.

S. Cecilia, Virgin and Martyr.

230.

THIS blessed martyr is honoured by the whole Church, though the circumstances of her passion are not certainly known. Those which are related in her Acts are worthy of little credit. Ado, Tillemont, and other historians, fix the date of her martyrdom about the year 170, in the reign of the emperor Aurelius. It is even supposed by some that she suffered in Sicily, and that her body was removed to Rome before the end of the fifth age. But the more common opinion is that she was a Roman lady, the wife of Valerian, with whom she lived as a sister, and who shared her martyrdom in 230. He had

q q

been converted to God by her prayers. Tiburtius, her brother, also laid down his life for the faith at the same time. Her name occurs in all the ancient martyrologies. In the Sacramentary of S. Gregory there is a Preface appointed for the Mass of her feast, which has these words: "Who in weakness dost perfect strength, and overcomest the enemy of mankind, not only by men, but by women also: By Whose gift, the blessed Cæcilia was confirmed both in the purpose of virginity, and in the confession of faith, so that neither by the inconstancy of her age was she turned from her intention, nor softened by carnal blandishments; She was neither terrified through the frailty of her sex, nor overcome by the cruelty of her torments: But, preserving the integrity of body and soul, with the palm of virginity and of martyrdom, she was found worthy to attain to the eternal beatitude. Through Christ our Lord." Her name is commemorated by the Latin Church in the Canon of the Mass. It was famous in the sixth century, as we learn from Fortunatus, who assures us, that some of her relics had been placed in a church at Ravenna. Early in that age, a church was dedicated at Rome in her honour. It is a station on the third Wednesday in Lent, and gives title to a Cardinal priest.

In the beginning of the ninth century this church had fallen into decay, and pope Paschal I. began to rebuild it. It was then supposed that the Lombards had carried away the body of the saint from Rome, about sixty years before. She is related to have appeared to the holy Father, and to have assured him that her body still lay near the city, in a place

which she told him of. He accordingly found it in the cemetery of Prætextatus on the Appian way, wrapped in cloth of gold, which was still stained with blood. The bodies of her companions were lying near. Paschal translated them all into the new church with becoming honour, and laid them under the high altar, in the year 821. He founded a monastery near the church, whence the praises of God might ascend night and day : and gave many costly presents of vestments, ornaments, and vessels for the service of the altar. The shrine which enclosed the body of S. Cæcilia he inlaid within and without with plates of silver.

In 1599, Cardinal Sfondrati, who derived his title from this church, bestowed much care and expense in restoring and beautifying it. While he was making some excavations near the altar, he discovered the opening of the tomb, through which the faithful had been accustomed to put handkerchiefs and cloths, that they might touch the holy body. From the inscription which pope Paschal had affixed, no doubt remained that it was the sepulchre of the blessed S. Cæcilia. Within the marble monument, a chest of cypress was found in which her body had rested since its translation in 821. The bloodstained garments were still visible ; and the body was lying, not as usual with the face upwards, but on its right side. The dress was gathered carefully about it, so that it resembled a person asleep rather than dead. It was laid in a sumptuous chest, and was removed on the 22nd of November from under the high altar into a vault richly decorated, called the Confession of S. Cæcilia, in presence of pope Clement VIII., and the

college of Cardinals. This church is called In Trastevere, or Beyond the Tiber, to distinguish it from two others in Rome which bear her name.

S. Cæcilia is generally represented as playing on an instrument of music, and singing the divine praises, which her Acts mention as her frequent employment. Hence she is regarded as the patroness of the music of the Church; and it may help us to discover the true source of its grandeur, if we consider that this distinction has been accorded to a virgin and a martyr. For the author of the *Mores Catholici* has remarked, that “the unearthly tones which pervade the old Catholic compositions are a sufficient proof of spiritual communion with a holier world. The gift of song was imparted to many purified souls, as to Hildegard, and the saintly sisters of S. Oringa. The holy Katharine of Bologna, with eyes turned to heaven, repeated to her astonished sisters the song which she had heard in praise of God, when so far spent with sickness that she had received the last unction: such jubilation filled her heart, while repeating to them that sweet song, that all who saw her thought that she must die for joy; but she remained one year more on earth. The holy Hermann Joseph, of Steinfeld, while composing a hymn in honour of S. Ursula, is said to have received aid from the pure spirits whom he loved for the sake of Jesus; and Palestrina himself has said of his best compositions, that he only wrote what he had heard angels sing¹.” It was in the retreats of mortified and contemplative men that the sublime hymns of the Church were

¹ Book viii. 3.

written and adapted to holy music. The devout religious brother Cedmon in the convent of S. Hilda at Whitby, in the seventh age, is one example among many; of whom we read, that he composed many songs full of the greatest sweetness and compunction, which kindled in all hearts a contempt of the world, and a longing after the celestial life. He was taught the art of singing by none, but received it as a free gift from heaven. What God had given him he reserved for His service alone, and was never known to compose any thing light or trifling. The last words which he uttered on earth were of praise¹.

If such was the character of the ancient musicians of the Church, it is not surprising that their compositions are of a higher order than the genius of secular men could ever attain, or even comprehend. Of some of these it has been truly said that they should never be sung excepting on one's knees. Indeed they never can be separated from the associations of the Divine Office, which gives them an enduring expression, and as it were makes them part of the voice of the Church in the moments when heaven seems nearest. To feel their power they must be heard in the sanctuary, while the solemn rites are proceeding which they were created to honour. "How did I weep in Thy hymns and canticles," exclaims S. Augustin, in his Confessions, "deeply moved by the voices of Thy sweet-sounding Church! their voices flowed into my ears, and the truth distilled into my heart, and the tears ran down, and I was happy in them²." And in another place he

¹ Ven. Bed. Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. 24.

² Lib. ix. 6.

says, " When I remember the tears which I shed at the chaunts of Thy Church, in the first days of my recovered faith, and how I am still moved by them, not indeed by the song, but by the things which are sung, when they are chaunted with a clear voice, and suitable modulation, I acknowledge the great usefulness of this institution¹." Many, whose hearts were less inflamed with the divine love than his, in succeeding ages, have felt the same. The poet sang truly and beautifully who likened music to " the silver key of the fountain of tears," but his words have a depth beyond his thought, when they are applied to the music of the Church. And it is fitting that in the country of our exile our most joyous, holiest feelings should be allied with tears. But above, there is a song, such as mortal ear has never heard, " which no man can learn but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth ; for they are virgins, and they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth²." To hear that song, though he may never sing it, Jesu grant to every tearful penitent.

Blessed Saints ! this broken rate
Bids our slowness ply its wings,
While your quick and active state
Ever wakes and ever sings.

Yet even this your school too was ;
And your now unwearied lays,
By this change of song and pause
Here 'mongst us you learned to raise.

¹ Lib. x. 33.

Rev. xiv. 3.

Though our notes be short and few,
 And our rests, too, oft and long,
 If we keep in tune with you,
 We at last shall sing your song.

If our utmost humble powers
 Here our daily prayers attend,
 These poor psalms shall there, like yours,
 In a nightless complin end.

Glory, Lord, to Thee alone,
 Here below, as there above ;
 May Thy joys, Great Three in One,
 Ever draw and crown our love.

Hickes' Devotions.

NOVEMBER 23.

S. Clement, Bishop of Rome, and Martyr.

100.

THE early history of S. Clement is very uncertain ; but there is reason to suppose that he was by birth a Jew. He was the companion and fellow labourer of S. Paul ; and was at Philippi in the year 62, when the blessed Apostle wrote his epistle to the Church in that city, as we learn from his own words, " I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life¹." Ancient writers are agreed in attesting his acquaintance with some of the members of the sacred college ; and Rufinus mentions him as

¹ Philip. iv. 3.

himself almost an apostle. He followed the blessed Prince of the apostles to Rome, and was ordained to the episcopate by his venerable hands, in order, as some historians say, that during the frequent absence of S. Peter from Rome on the affairs of the Church, there might always be a person in the city ready to discharge the functions of a bishop. Others are of opinion that he was appointed a missionary bishop among the heathen at a short distance from Rome. He may have been consecrated to the pastoral care of the Jews in the city, whose government, in the infancy of the Church, was very different from that of the Gentiles. Or, again, he may have been only appointed to assume his authority on the decease of S. Peter. But, as S. Cyprian observes that none of the Apostles were properly diocesan bishops, S. Clement may be easily supposed to have been Bishop of Rome in the lifetime of S. Peter, without impairing the unity of the One chair.

But after the glorious martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul, in the year 66, it is certain that S. Clement for some reason did not insist on his right to succeed to the vacant see; and S. Linus was elected Bishop. He is supposed to have been the same person whose salutation S. Paul sent to Timothy in his second Epistle from Rome, in 65¹. Pudens and Claudia, who are mentioned with him, were perhaps his parents. He died in 78, and was succeeded by S. Cletus, or Anacletus, as his name is often written, who filled the see till the year 90. In the following year S. Clement was invested with the episcopal authority. The event was formerly com-

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 21.

memorated in some parts of the Church on the 23d of January, which was called the festival of the chair of S. Clement.

The general persecution, under Domitian, soon after fell upon the Church. Its approach was made known in a vision to S. Hermas, who, in obedience to a command which he received at the same time, revealed it to S. Clement, that the faithful might be warned of the coming storm. Hermas was the author of *The Shepherd*, a book well known in the Church; and he is mentioned by S. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans¹.

The Church of Corinth was then torn by internal divisions, some daring leaders having made a schism, and deposed the clergy who refused to submit to them. Many fell away from the faith in consequence, and occasion was given to the heathen to blaspheme. Those who remained stedfast besought the Church of Rome to assist them; but though it was grieved to witness their miserable condition, the dangers of the persecution prevented it for a time from rendering them any other aid than its prayers. As soon as days of peace returned, on the death of the emperor in 96, S. Clement, in the name of the Roman Church, addressed an epistle to them, in which he contrasted the happy state of their former unity with the sad consequences of their disunion. He exhorted them all, and especially the authors of the evil, to retrieve their lost blessings by penance, and holy humility, and submission to the will of God.

This epistle is celebrated among ecclesiastical writings. It was received and publicly read, not

¹ Rom. xvi. 14.

only in Corinth, but in many other Churches. Some have even wished to include it among the canonical scriptures. In style and expression it is said to bear a great resemblance to the Epistle to the Hebrews; and hence S. Clement has been sometimes supposed to have been the author, or at least the translator, of that epistle also. All the copies of this letter to the Corinthians in the original language had been lost for many ages, when Patrick Young, librarian to the king of England, in 1633, published it from the manuscript copy of the holy Scriptures which had been sent from Alexandria to K. James I. The writing is supposed to be as old as the Nicene Council. Its authenticity is verified by many passages which are quoted by ancient authors.

The labours of S. Clement were finished in the year 100. Eusebius and the other historians who mention his decease, are silent regarding any of its circumstances. But the Latin Church seems to sanction the nearly universal tradition that he died for the Faith, by enrolling him among the martyrs in the Canon of the Mass, with the holy Bishops who had gone before him. He probably suffered in the persecution which Trajan inflicted on the Church. His festival is marked on the 23d of November, in all the Western kalendars and martyrologies. The Greeks observe it on the 24th of this month; and in the Menology of Basil it is honoured on the 25th. The Sacramentary of S. Gregory contains this preface on the day of his feast: "It is very worthy, just, becoming, and salutary, that we should always and every where give thanks to Thee, O Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God: and on this day which the pas-

sion of the blessed Clement has consecrated, and made venerable to us : who, imbued with the preaching of the Apostles, educated in their heavenly doctrines, and illustrious in the dignity of their succession, shone forth a renowned martyr and a famous Bishop, through Christ our Lord."

There is an ancient account of his martyrdom, which relates that he was banished into Chersonesus, by Trajan, and was finally thrown into the sea, with an anchor tied to his neck ; and that many miracles were witnessed at the spot. The lessons in the second Nocturn in his office in the Roman Breviary are taken from this account ; but Tillemont and other eminent authorities have condemned it as apocryphal

A church in Rome was dedicated in his honour in the fourth age, in which Zozimus condemned Cœlestius, the disciple of Pelagius, in the following century. It was the scene of other councils ; and is a station on the second Monday in Lent. It was repaired by pope Clement XI. early in the eighteenth century.

S. Gregory of Tours records miracles which were performed with the relics of S. Clement in Limousin. A bishop of Clermont in the fourth century is said to have placed an arm of the saint in a church which he built under his invocation. Those who adopt the Greek account of his martyrdom in Chersonesus, report that his body was translated to Rome in 867. When the Emperor Louis le Debonnaire endowed the abbey of Cava, near Salerno, in 872, he enriched it with relics of S. Clement, which he had obtained from pope Adrian II.

Another epistle is ascribed to S. Clement ; but

without good authority. The Apostolical Constitutions and Canons also have been supposed to be his work ; but they are now generally believed to have been compiled in a later age, before the council of Nicæa. The Liturgy which goes under the name of S. Clement is also very ancient, and as Bona remarks, if not drawn up by the Apostles and enlarged by their successors, which is very probable, was at least used by the fathers of the second and third centuries ¹.

As heavenly blue breaks on a troubled deep,
A voice of gentle blame,
From the calm grave where Paul and Peter sleep,
Unto their children came,
From Rome to Corinth. O'er the rising din
It swelled, as from their purer seats above,
And, like a solemn undersound therein,
Paul's moving tone. It was thy watchful love,
Clement, whose name is in the book of life ;
The while thy Church, true to Heaven's sacred mould,
'Mid persecution, poverty, and strife,
Glorious within, and wrought of purest gold,
Began, 'mid hanging mists, her greatness to unfold.
Cathedral, p. 274.

NOVEMBER 25.

S. Katharine, Virgin and Martyr.

FOURTH CENTURY.

S. KATHARINE, or Ækatharina, as the Greeks call her, was honoured to witness a noble confession for Christ, at Alexandria, during the reign of the em-

¹ Rer. Liturg. lib. i. c. 8.

peror Maximin II. Many shared in her suffering, and in its eternal reward. Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, has drawn a picture of the conflict which the holy confessors had to endure in the early part of the fourth century. "The Christians," he says, "trampled under foot the fear of death, and despised the violent tyranny of man. The men endured the fire and the sword, the piercing of nails, wild beasts, drowning in deep gulfs of the sea, the cutting off and burning of limbs, and the tearing out of their eyes; in a word, the mutilation of their whole bodies; and, in addition to these, famine, fetters, and chains; yet in all they would rather give a proof of their endurance for true piety, than reject God, and worship idols. Even women, no less strengthened than men by the doctrine of the true faith, endured, some of them, the same trials as the men, and attained equal rewards of their virtue. Others, when they were hurried away to be violated, suffered the loss of their lives rather than of their modesty." Among this glorious company the historian has described one in particular, who is supposed by many to have been S. Katharine, though some are inclined to think that he commemorates S. Dorothy. These are his words:—"There was one Christian woman, the noblest and the wealthiest of all the ladies of Alexandria. When others had been violated by the tyrant, she overcame the boundless and unbridled licentiousness of Maximin, by a certain manly loftiness of soul. She was a lady most renowned for the splendour of her birth, and for her riches, as well as for her remarkable learning; but she set modesty and purity before all these:

and when the tyrant had been often foiled in his assaults, he did not condemn her to be beheaded, for he perceived that she was so prepared for death, that her desire for it was greater than his cruelty; but he stripped her of all her goods, and sent her into exile. A multitude of other women, who would not bear even to hear of the violence which the governors of the provinces attempted, suffered every kind of excruciating torture and capital punishment¹."

The emperor Basil, in his Greek Menology, relates that the saint was of royal descent, and famed for her learning. She silenced a company of heathen philosophers, whom Maximin had commanded to reason with her; and some of them, convinced by her arguments, confessed Christ, and suffered death. The same authority further assures us that she was condemned to be tortured by an engine made of several wheels joined together, and armed with sharp-pointed spikes, which, when the wheels went round, would have torn her body in pieces; but the engine was destroyed by an unseen power, and the saint finished her confession by the sword. Hence a wheel is her usual emblem.

Her name is highly venerated by the Eastern Church, as well as in the West. Her body was discovered by the Christians in Egypt, in the eighth century, while they were suffering under the yoke of the Saracens. It was soon after translated to the great monastery on the top of Mount Sinai, in Arabia, which had been richly endowed by the emperor Justinian. When it is mentioned in ancient chro-

¹ Eusebius Eccl. Hist. b. viii. 14.

nicles that her body was transported thither by angels, nothing more is meant than that the monks themselves conveyed it with reverent hands to their house in the desert. From that time we hear more of S. Katharine and her relics. The devotion to her memory probably passed into the west in the age of the Crusades. Paul, the holy hermit of Latra, in the tenth century, celebrated her festival with great solemnity. Simeon, a monk of Mount Sinai, coming to Rouen to receive an annual alms from Richard, duke of Normandy, in the eleventh century, brought with him relics of the saint, which he deposited in a monastery near the city. Her name then began to be venerated in France.

A holy well near Edinburgh still bears the name of the virgin martyr. Hector Boethius, in his History of Scotland, says of it:—"About two miles distant from the town, more or less, a fountain flows, on which drops of oil float in such abundance, that however much you take away, not the less remains. They say that it arose from a drop of the oil¹ of S. Katharine, which was brought to S. Margaret² from Mount Sinai. And the truth of this is attested by the name of the blessed Katharine, which is given to the fountain, and by the chapel which was built in her honour near the place, by command of S. Margaret. This oil has great virtue in healing diseases of the skin."

¹ "Whether this oil flowed from the bodies of the saints," says Mabillon, *De Cult. Sanct. Incognit.* xix., "or whether it was taken from the lamps which burned before their relics, is not clear. The latter seems to me much more probable."

² Queen of Scotland in the eleventh century.

K. James VI. of Scotland had so high an esteem for this well, that when he returned from England in 1617, to visit his ancient kingdom, he went to see it, and ordered that it should be carefully built over and repaired, and that steps should be made, to afford more easy access to the oil. It continued to be held in great veneration till 1650, when the soldiers of Cromwell invaded Scotland, and defaced all such memorials of pious devotion as had escaped the fury of the Presbyterians. Chalmers says, "it was completely demolished early in the last century, by some sacrilegious person, who was remarked by the neighbouring people not to have afterwards prospered." It is still used by the poor for the sake of the healing virtues of its oil, and is visited by the curious, who smile at the credulity of S. Margaret, as they are pleased to call it.

The hospital of S. Katharine in London, near the Tower, was founded by queen Matilda, the wife of Stephen, in 1149, for a master, three brothers, who were chaplains, and three sisters; also for ten poor bedeswomen, and six poor clerks. It was enriched by the gifts of queen Eleanor, the wife of K. Edward I., and of Philippa, the queen of Edward III. Katharine of Aragon also was a benefactor to it, for the honour of the saint whose name she bore. It received privileges from pope Honorius.

Ye Virgin company
Who tune your golden harps on high,
True to the Lamb in trial's hour,
And now His flock's celestial flower,
Rising through gate of heavenly morn,
Sing ye the Virgin-born !

This is the sacred day
When first He called you hence away,
When with your full-orbed lamps of light,
Ye summoned were at dead of night ;
And now ye stand beside His throne
For evermore His own.

Hymns from the Parisian Breviary, p. 319.

“ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” It is the Lord Himself Who speaks, in the words of the holy Gospel according to S. Matthew, which are sung on the feast of All Hallows, in the Western Church. “ Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven¹.” Of the lives of all the saints this is the sum. The child-like earnestness and simplicity, the profound humility, the sackcloth and ashes, all are recorded here, no less than the stole of glory, and the unfading crown. Hear S. Paul unfolding the graces of the saintly character, when he says, “ The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

¹ S. Matt. v. 3—10.

long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance¹." "Such were the gentle affections which inspired S. Neot with the resolution to copy the predominant virtue of every person in his cloister that had any;" as an eloquent author remarks, whom we have often listened to with delight in the course of these meditations; "the continence of one man, the pleasantness of another, the suavity of a third, the seriousness, gentleness, good-nature, and love of singing and of study in others; so that he became 'humble to all, affable in conversation, mild in transactions of business, venerable in aspect, serene in countenance, moderate even in his walk, sincere, upright, calm, temperate, and charitable².'" "

But it beseems not us to descant upon these fruits of holiness, where admiring love ought to be too deep for utterance. And if we turn our eyes inwards upon ourselves, alas! what a contrast do we behold; "Woe is me! for I am undone," cried the prophet, and his words may well be ours, "because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts³." Well might S. Bernard say, that "we ought, on the festivals of the saints, both to rejoice and to be ashamed; to rejoice, because we have sent forward our patrons; to be confounded, because we cannot follow them⁴." But a voice of comfort is borne to us over the long tract of ages, from the lips of the same saintly teacher, in these words: "His was no celestial body, and not even a celestial spirit,"—he is commemorating

¹ Gal. v. 22.

² Morus, p. 264.

³ Isa. vi. 5.

⁴ Serm. in Vig. SS. Petri et Pauli.

S. Martin, but his language may be applied to any of the perfect,—“but he was mortal, a dweller on the earth, a son of man. On earth he was born, on earth educated; he was exercised and proved on earth, and on earth he was consummated. He was not a patriarch, nor one of the prophets, much less was he Christ; but Christ was in him, not otherwise than by faith, of Whom the Apostle says, ‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.’ Yesterday indeed was from the beginning of the world till the Ascension of the Lord; to-day is from that time till the consummation of the world; and for ever, you may understand after the general resurrection of all. To none of these is Christ wanting; to none, is Jesus; to none, anointing; to none, salvation. To patriarchs and prophets, He was shown in vision; to apostles, in humanity; to Martin, in faith; to the angels, in sight; which sight He hath promised that He will show to all His elect, not indeed to-day, but for ever¹.”

But do you ask whence those holy souls derived such overflowing supplies of grace, as to make their very perfection incredible to a degenerate age? From the divine institutions of the Catholic Church, her sacraments, and her heavenly lessons; and chiefly from the salutary ordinance of penitence, and from the super-celestial Food of the adorable Eucharist. “Behold God, the Saint of saints, the Creator of men, and the Lord of angels, is present on the altar! Those who are in chosen fellowship advanced to the great supper of the blessed Lamb, whereon who feeds hath every

¹ Serm. in Fest. S. Mart.

wish fulfilled, can say with truth that Jesus, the most sweet, most benign Jesus, is in the midst of them; they see Him—blessed are they. They see God. ‘O invisible Creator of the world, how wondrously dost Thou act with us!’ exclaims one of that happy number; ‘how sweetly and graciously dost Thou dispose things with Thy elect, in offering them in the Sacrament Thyself.’ When we recal to mind those ancient, holy men, many of them the wonder of their age for wisdom, the glory of their age for earthly grandeur, who evinced seraphic love for this divine mystery; when we recollect the number of profound angelic intelligences, which recognized in it the source of all their light, of all their virtue; when with the eyes of mind we behold them bowed unto the earth, in presence of the Eucharist, or with looks directed towards the hallowed steps, so full of joy, as if they saw descending from them every light in heaven, the natural impulse is to exclaim with the ascetic, ‘O their true, ardent faith, a probable existing argument for Thy sacred presence.’ Not to speak of streams of living radiance which played round the outward fleshly dwelling, as we read of innumerable saints, the fragrancy of heaven, rising from within, proclaimed that He had visited the human soul, and entered it with His glory. Here, at length, is order, with equality,—the rich man and the beggar, side by side, in charity made one; for what availeth ignorance or skill, where God immediate rules, and nature, awed, suspends her sway? These hearts of the ages of faith are not left without afflation of eternal bliss; they exhale a perfume transcending all sweetness, which attests that they

have commingled with the source of all delight—the Author of all purity—that God has revealed Himself within them, and that He Who had no rest upon the Cross, has rested there¹.”

Now, alas! the scene around us is different, and “when excellent things go away,” as Jeremy Taylor says, “and they look back upon us, as our blessed Saviour did upon Saint Peter, we are more moved than by the nearer embraces of a full and actual possession.” But even in an age when irreverence and heresy occupy the place of power, the humble, holy ones of Christ still find a retreat at the foot of the altar, where the memory of all else is lost in the adoring love which welcomes Him to their lowly breast. “Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof; but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed,” they murmur as they kiss the pavement. Here, amidst the Egyptian darkness of the latter days, is the land of Goshen, where the children of the kingdom have light in all their dwellings². Here is the school of saints; for God has not left Himself without a witness, in the dreariest times. From its holy discipline, blessed souls are ever passing to the unveiled sight of Him Whom they were taught here to receive as a hidden God, their Saviour. And it is the Sacred Presence of the Lord Jesus in the Sacrament of the Altar that makes it the chief bond of union between the Church on earth, and in suffering, and the Church in glory: and therefore, in the sublime words of the Preface, “With angels, and archangels, with thrones and

¹ *Mores Catholici*, b. viii. c. 16.

² *Exod.* x. 23.

dominations, and with all the array of the heavenly army, we sing the hymn of Thy glory, without end saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

And thus our meditations might fitly close ; for object worthier than this, thought cannot compass, till faith shall be exchanged for vision. But, as it is a matter of doubt with some, how far the honour of the saints may be made to agree with the glory and majesty which belong to God, let us listen to the testimony of an ancient father, who lived in the age of the apostate Julian, before the second general council. S. Asterius, bishop of Amasea in Pontus, after enumerating the benefits which the Church derives from the relics of the martyrs, thus proceeds ; " We apply to them as intercessors, for their prayers and entreaties, for the sake of the great boldness in which they excel. By their assistance, the ills of poverty are lightened, diseases are cured, and the threats of princes are pacified ; and the sacred shrines of the martyrs are tranquil havens in all the tempests and storms of the world.

" In this manner, the father or mother, bearing the weak child, when the art of physicians fails to help him, flies to their assistance, and going to some one of the martyrs, offers prayer through him to the Lord, addressing him thus ; ' Thou who hast suffered for Christ, intercede for this suffering and disease ; thou who art strong in courage, plead for thy fellow-servants. Although thou hast ceased to be among men, thou knowest what are the sufferings and dis-

eases of our nature. Thou didst thus once implore the martyrs, before thou wast thyself a martyr. Thou didst ask, and hast received ; now grant, when thou hast the power. From the overflowing of thy reward, beg that which may serve our advantage ; let us be healed by thy blood, as thou art cleansed by the blood of Christ.'

" Another, going to marry, begins his nuptial life by pouring forth prayers at the martyrdoms. Who, on the eve of a voyage, ever loosens his cables before he has first invoked the God of the sea through the martyrs ? Furthest be it from us to adore the martyrs, but we pay them honour, as to the true adorers of God. We worship not men, but we admire those who in time of persecution nobly sacrificed themselves for the sake of the worship of God. We lay them in shrines and sepulchres richly adorned, and we raise magnificent houses for their resting-places, that we may emulate the honour of those who have gloriously finished their life. Since our prayers are not entreaties so much, as a commemoration of our sins, we fly to our fellow-servants who are very dear to God, that for those who have done well and virtuously our sins may be pardoned¹. Where is the crime in honouring the martyrs, and in being careful to please God ? What crime is there in flying to their patronage ? ' Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,' " in these words he concludes ; " therefore let us pray God, and let us also beseech the martyrs to entreat our common Lord, that the spirit of compunction

¹ See Gen. xviii. 32. Job xlii. 8. Acts vii. 60.

may be given to those who are led away by the error of heretics ; that all doubt being removed, like a middle wall of division, we may all come together in fraternal unity in Christ Jesus our Lord, Whom glory becometh for ever ¹."

Some eminent writers, even of the modern school, teach the same. Thus bishop Montague says, " It is confessed that all the saints departed, each several saint departed and with God, do and doth incessantly invoke the High Majesty of heaven for us miserable sinners." Bishop Forbes, in his *Considerationes Modestæ*, remarks, " The invocation, or addressing of angels and saints, that they pray unto God with us and for us, I can prove to be neither unlawful nor useless." And Thorndike declares that " the greatest lights of the Greek and Latin Church have all of them spoken to the saints departed, and desired their assistance ²."

" And another angel came and stood at the altar," says the divine John, in the book of the Revelation³, " having a golden censer ; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came up with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand." The blessed privileges which arise from this doctrine of the Christian Faith, thus attested by Holy Scripture and the interpretation of the Catholic Church, are to be felt and enjoyed in silence, rather than to

¹ Sermo in Sanct. Mar. Bib. Patr. t. v. p. 833.

² See Brit. Critic, LXIV. p. 355. ³ Rev. viii. 3, 4.

be set forth by argument. The "Communion of Saints" thus remains no dead and unmeaning form of words, but it becomes a source of consolation and devotion to many simple souls, to whom the false reasoning of sophists will happily be for ever strange. "Such honour have all His saints¹." And not those only who, for their eminent holiness and virtue, have been enrolled in Catholic martyrologies and kalendars, but the countless hosts who are without spot before the Throne of God. By virtue of their union with Him Who is the Advocate with the Father, they plead His merits, and invoke His blessings for us². And finally, at the awful doom, they shall appear with Him as the Judges of quick and dead. "Know ye not," says S. Paul, "that the saints shall judge the world³?"

"But the way of precept is long, while that of example is short," as Bona observes. Let us hear S. Gregory Nazianzen addressing the glorified spirit of his friend, S. Basil. His authority in the Church is great, he presided at the second general council in 381, and himself slept in the Lord in the year 389. "These things to thee from us, O Basil;" he thus concludes his funeral oration; "from a tongue once most sweet to thee, and thine equal in honour and in age. If indeed they are near thy worth, this is thy favour, for trusting in thee we have undertaken this oration. But if indeed they are far beneath its dignity and our hope, what can I do, a man oppressed with old age, and disease, and grief for thy loss; although that is pleasing to God, which is done according to the

¹ Ps. cxlix. 9. Eng. Ps.

² S. John xvi. 23, 26, 27.

³ 1 Cor. vi. 2. Jude 14.

ability. But do thou, O holy and divine heart, look down upon us from above ; and the thorn in the flesh, which has been given to us by God for our training, either remove by thy prayers, or at least teach us to bear bravely. And direct all our life to what will best accomplish this ; and when we shall depart, receive us there into thy tabernacles¹."

Ere we turn to depart on our several ways, let the eye of our faith rest in adoring homage on Him Who is the Sun and Centre of that celestial company. " Pray we to Him," with the anchorite of Norwich, " for His holie flesh, and for His precious blood, His holie passion, his deare worthie death, and worshipfull wounds ; for all the blessed kindnes and the endles life that we have of all this, it is of His goodness. And pray we Him, for His sweet Mother's love that bare Him ; and all the helpe that we have of her, it is of His goodness. And praie we, for his holie Crosse that He died on ; and all the helpe and all the vertue that we have of that Crosse, it is of His goodness. And on the same wise, all the helpe that we have of speciall saints, and of all the blessed companie of heaven ; the deare worthie love, and the holy endles friendship that we have of them, it is of His goodness²."

To Him, then, Who is the Sun of justice, the Joy of angels, the King of patriarchs, the Master of apostles, the Teacher of evangelists, the Fortitude of martyrs, the Light of confessors, the Spouse of

¹ Orat. xx.

² " XVI Revelations of Divine Love made to Mother Juliana, an anchorite of Norwich, in the days of king Edward III."

virgins, Himself the Son of the Virgin, and the Crown of all saints; "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and His Father, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

"Most gracious God, the Author of all sanctity, and the lover of unity; whose wisdom has established an admirable communion between the Church triumphant in heaven and militant on earth, as members of the same mystical body, whereof Thy Son Jesus Christ is the Head; mercifully grant that as Thy blessed pray to Thee for us, we may continually praise Thee for them, and in correspondence to their perfect charity, with pious observance celebrate their memories, and imitate their holy conversation; till we all meet before Thy glorious throne, and with one heart adore the Saviour of us all, Who with Thee liveth and reigneth, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever¹. Amen."

"And when it pleaseth God of His myghte,
Depart we all in heaven's lyghte;
To the whiche bryng us the Trinitie;
Amen, amen, for charitie."

**Praise and Eternal glory to the Sacred and
Undivided Trinity.**

¹ Hickes' Devotions.

A TABLE

OF THE

LESSER HOLYDAYS OF THE PRESENT ENGLISH
KALENDAR, IN THE ORDER OF DATES.

First Century.

	DATE
Conception of B. V. Mary	
Nativity of B. V. Mary	
S. Anne, Mother of B. V. Mary	
Visitation of B. V. Mary	
Name of Jesus	
Beheading of S. John Baptist	31 or 32
Transfiguration	32
S. Mary Magdalene	
S. Nicomede, P. M.	90
S. John ante portam Latinam	95

Second Century.

S. Clement, B. M.	100
------------------------	-----

Third Century.

S. Perpetua, M.	203
S. Cæcilia, V. M.	230
S. Fabian, B. M.	250

	DATE
S. Agatha, V. M.....	251
S. Laurence, D. M.....	258
S. Cyprian, Ar. M.	258
S. Valentine, B. M.....	270
S. Prisca, V. M.	270
S. Crispin, M.	288
S. Lucian, P. M.	290
S. Denys, B. M.	290
S. Faith, V. M.	about 290
S. Margaret, V. M.....	End of the Century.

Fourth Century.

S. George, M.	303
S. Alban, M.	303
S. Lucy, V. M.....	304
S. Agnes, V. M.....	304 or 305
S. Katharine, V. M.....	
S. Vincent, D. M.	304
S. Blasius, B. M.....	316
Invention of Holy Cross.....	326
Exaltation of Holy Cross	335
S. Sylvester, B.	335
S. Enurchus, B.	about 340
S. Nicolas, B.	342
S. Hilary, B. C.	368
S. Ambrose, B. C.	397
S. Martin, B. C.	397

Fifth Century.

S. Jerom, P. C. D.	420
S. Augustin, Hippo, B. C. D.....	430
S. Britius, B.....	444
Translation of S. Martin, B. C.	473

Sixth Century.

DATE

S. Remigius, B.	533
S. Benedict, Ab.	543
S. David, Ar.	544
S. Leonard, C.	559
S. Machutus, B.	564, or 565

Seventh Century.

S. Gregory, B. C.	604
S. Augustin, <i>Canterbury</i> , Ar.	604
S. Chad, B.	673
S. Etheldreda, V.	679

Eighth Century.

S. Lambert, B. M.	709
S. Giles, Ab. C.	about 724
Ven. Bede, P.	735
S. Boniface, B. M.	755

Ninth Century.

S. Swithun, B.	862, Translated 971
S. Edmund, K. M.	870

Tenth Century.

S. Edward, K.	978
Translation of S. Edward, K. M.	980
S. Dunstan, Ar.	988

Eleventh Century.

S. Alphege, Ar.	1012
S. Edward, K. C.	1066, Translated 1163

Thirteenth Century.

	DATE
S. Hugh, B.	1200
S. Richard, B.	1253

O Sapientia.

Lammas.

A TABLE

OF

THE LESSER HOLYDAYS OF THE PRESENT ENGLISH KALENDAR,

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE CHURCHES TO WHICH THEY
ORIGINALLY BELONGED.

Eastern Church.

Conception of B. V. Mary.
Nativity of B. V. Mary.
S. Anne, Mother of B. V. Mary.
Visitation of B. V. Mary.
Name of Jesus.
Beheading of S. John Baptist.
Transfiguration.
S. Mary Magdalene.
S. John, ante Portam Lati-
nam.
S. Margaret, V. M.
S. George, M.
S. Katharine, V. M.
S. Blasius, B. M.
Invention of Holy Cross.
Exaltation of Holy Cross.
S. Nicolas, B.

Church of Britain.

S. Alban, M.
S. David, Ar.
S. Augustin, *Cant.* Ar.
S. Chad, B.
S. Etheldreda, V.

Ven. Bede, P.
S. Edmund, K. M.
Translation of S. Swithun, B.
S. Edward, K. M.
Translation of S. Edward,
K. M.
S. Dunstan, Ar.
S. Alphege, Ar.
Translation of S. Edward,
K. C.
S. Hugh, B.
S. Richard, B.
O Sapientia.
Lammas.

Church of Gaul.

S. Crispin, M.
S. Faith, V. M.
S. Denys, B. M.
S. Lucian, P. M.
S. Enurchus, B.
S. Hilary, B. C.
S. Martin, B. C.
S. Britius, B.
Translation of S. Martin, B. C.
S. Remigius, B.

SS

S. Leonard, C.
 S. Machutus, B.
 S. Lambert, B. M.
 S. Giles, Ab. C.
 S. Boniface, B. M.

Church of Rome.

S. Nicomede, P. M.
 S. Clement, B. M.
 S. Perpetua, V.
 S. Cæcilia, V. M.
 S. Fabian, B. M.
 S. Laurence, D. M.
 S. Prisca, V. M.
 S. Valentine, B. M.
 S. Agnes, V. M.
 S. Sylvester, B.
 S. Gregory, B. C.

Church of Italy and Sicily.

S. Agatha, V. M.
 S. Lucy, V. M.
 S. Ambrose, B. C.
 S. Jerom, P. C. D.
 S. Benedict, Ab.

Church of Africa.

S. Cyprian, Ar. M.
 S. Augustin, *Hippo.* B. C. D.

Church of Spain.

S. Vincent, D. M.

ALPHABETICAL TABLE

OF THE

LESSER HOLYDAYS.

SS. Agatha. Feb. 5.	Exaltation of the Holy Cross.
Agnes. Jan. 21.	Sept. 14.
Alban. June 17.	Fabian. Jan. 20.
Alphege. April 19.	Faith. Oct. 6.
Ambrose. April 4.	George. April 23.
Anne. July 26.	Giles. Sept. 1.
Augustin. <i>Hippo</i> . Aug. 28.	Gregory. Mar. 12.
Augustin. <i>Cant</i> . May 26.	Hilary. Jan. 13.
Bede. May 27.	Hugh. Nov. 17.
Beheading of S. John Baptist. Aug. 29.	Invention of the Holy Cross.
Benedict. Mar. 21.	May 3.
Blasius, Feb. 3.	Jerom. Sept. 30.
Boniface. June 5.	John ante Portam Latinam.
Britius. Nov. 13.	May 6.
Cæcilia. Nov. 22.	Katharine. Nov. 25.
Chad. Mar. 2.	Lambert. Sept. 17.
Clement. Nov. 23.	Lammas. Aug. 1.
Conception of B. V. Mary.	Laurence. Aug. 10.
Dec. 8.	Leonard. Nov. 6.
Crispin. Oct. 25.	Lucian. Jan. 8.
Cyprian. Sept. 26.	Lucy. Dec. 13.
David. Mar. 1.	Machutus. Nov. 15.
Denys. Oct. 9.	Margaret. July 20.
Dunstan. May 19.	Martin. Nov. 11.
Edmund. Nov. 20.	Mary Magdalene. July 22.
Edward. March 18.	
Etheldreda. Oct. 17.	
Enurchus. Sept. 7.	

626 ALPHABETICAL TABLE OF LESSER HOLYDAYS.

Name of Jesus. Aug. 7.
 Nativity of B. V. Mary. Sept.
 8.
 Nicolas. Dec. 6.
 Nicomede. June 1.

 O Sapientia. Dec. 16.

 Perpetua. Mar. 7.
 Prisca. Jan. 18.

 Remigius. Oct. 1.
 Richard. April 3.

 Sylvester. Dec. 31.

Transfiguration. Aug. 6.
 Translation of S. Martin.
 July 4.
 ————— S. Swithun.
 July 15.
 ————— S. Edward.
 June 20.
 ————— S. Edward, Con.
 Oct. 13.

 Valentine. Feb. 14.
 Vincent. Jan. 22.
 Visitation of B. V. Mary. July
 2.

THE END.

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

54
3

12

SEP 25 1933

